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DECEMBER 1988

A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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Iowa's Character Assassins

Thomas Mallon
On Discovery's Trail

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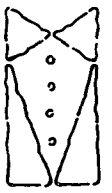

America's smokers love to go to restaurants. They do so with great frequency. Their tastes in food span the globe— American, Italian, Chinese, French, Japanese and Mexican cuisines. America's smokers feed this country's food service industry.

The American Smoker- an economic force.

PHILIP MORRIS
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Those "Moderate" Arab States

Should the U.S. sell them advanced weaponry?

Should we sell sophisticated armaments to the so-called "moderate" Arab countries? Recently, Saudi Arabia, usually considered the leader of the "moderate" Arabs, turned to Britain for the biggest arms contract ever. Many are concerned that the U.S. Congress, being reluctant to allow unlimited arms sales to the Arabs, is depriving the U.S. of lucrative business.

What are the facts?

■ The Arab states boast today one of the largest, most deadly and most sophisticated concentration of armament the world has ever seen, surpassed only (and not by all that much) by the arsenals of the two super-powers. And the buildup of arms continues incessantly—making one wonder how these essentially backward countries can possibly absorb and utilize all this weaponry. Excepting the oil-rich Gulf countries, most of these Arab states can fairly be described as economic basket cases, with social and demographic problems that seem almost unsolvable. Still, they dedicate a large share of their meager resources to the acquisition of ever more deadly and offensive weaponry, instead of putting them into the service of building their countries and uplifting their populations.

■ Saudi Arabia, the kingpin of the "moderates," is an immensely wealthy but sparsely populated country. It fields an army of only 72,000 men, but has 190 military planes and 550 tanks—just about the largest ratio of military hardware to military manpower in the world. Until recently, the fiction was maintained that it needed this enormous arsenal in order to defend itself against the "threat of Iran." But now that Iran is prostrate, this can no longer be alleged, and even the most naive no longer believe it. As King Khaled put it quite bluntly: "When we build our military power, we have no designs on anybody, except those who took away our land and the holy places in Jerusalem, and we know who they are!

■ "Moderate" Saudi Arabia has participated in every war against Israel, from the birth of the state in 1948. It has never made peace with Israel. It is the principal paymaster of Syria, Israel's most fervent enemy, and of the PLO, which is sworn to the destruction of Israel. It is the main player in the worldwide Arab boycott of Israel, whose purpose is the destruction of Israel's economy. Yet, Saudi Arabia, already armed to the teeth and beyond, has just acquired batteries of super missiles from China. They can reach every point in Israel within minutes and can be armed with chemical and atomic warheads. And Saudi Arabia has squadrons of fighter planes at its air base in Tobruk, just one minute's flying time from Israel.

■ But Saudi Arabia's "defense" needs are insatiable. It has just concluded an arms deal with Great Britain amounting to $27 billion, the largest ever negotiated by that country. It includes at least 40 Tornado fighter planes, 80 Westland helicopters, a minimum of six Sundown minesweepers, the construction of two major air bases, and much more. It is an enormous package and has only one purpose: to be part of the coordinated force that, it is hoped, will eventually destroy Israel. The remarkable thing is that Britain will not sell any arms to Israel, because it feels that it could "destabilize the region."

■ But those bare statistics refer only to some of the so-called "moderates." Including the self-proclaimed non-moderates, tiny Israel, the size of New Jersey, with 90% of its population concentrated in an area the size of metropolitan Indianapolis, faces one of the most daunting and fearsome military machines the world has ever seen. Counting only Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Egypt, Israel faces 17,265 tanks, 2789 combat aircraft and 3 million armed men. And that is before the huge sale of military material by Britain, missile deals with the Chinese, and other weaponry in the pipeline.

The concept of the "moderate" Arab states is a myth. The Arabs are single-mindedly determined to destroy Israel. They are spending hundreds of billions of dollars in order to attain strategic superiority to Israel, and then to accomplish its destruction. Israel is the only viable strategic asset the United States has in the entire area. Those who sell weapons to Israel's enemies—foreign countries and American companies—are playing into the hands of America's enemies. We do not find the Soviet Union selling weapons to the enemies of *its* allies. Why should the United States be any less straightforward in its foreign policy? If Israel were vanquished, the Persian Gulf with its vital resources, the entire Middle East and the Mediterranean Basin would fall under the unquestioned dominion of the Soviet Union.

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C O N T E N T S

Character Assassins ..... Joe Queenan 14
Today's short-story writers think life in America is dull, and so they fill their work with weirdos—the sort of folk they met at those fabled writers' workshops in Iowa.

Books for Christmas 16
Once again, bipartisan gift suggestions for the Holidays from eminent readers and writers.

Selling Globaloney in the Schools ..... David Brock 22
Now that their issue is dead, the nuclear-freezers have turned their attention to Central America—and to propagandizing American schools. And with the help of Minnesota's department of education, they're starting to make progress.

By the Late Morning's Light ..... Thomas Mallon 26
The first shuttle launch since Challenger *raised questions about the future and purpose of America's presence in space. From the Cape, a first-hand report.*

DEPARTMENTS

The Continuing Crisis 8
Correspondence 9
Editorials/That Scoundrel Bush/Bring Back Tip! ..... R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. 10
Capitol Ideas/Operation Rescue ..... Tom Bethell 11
Eminentoes/The Littlest Ex-President ..... Joseph Rodota 30
Among the Intellectualoids/Russell Means on Custer Hill ..... Wayne Michael Sarf 32
The Business of America/OPEC and the Next President ..... Irwin M. Stelzer 35
The Public Policy/Economic Boom Boxers ... Melville J. Ulmer 37
The Talkies/Streets of New York ..... Bruce Bawer 39
Presswatch/Screamers ..... Michael Ledeen 40
The Nation's Pulse/Disney's Cinderella Story ..... Benjamin J. Stein 42
The Great American Saloon Series/Paradise in Brooklyn ..... Richard Brookhiser 44
The Washington Spectator/Burning the Flame for JFK ..... Andrew Ferguson 56
Current Wisdom ..... Assorted Jackasses 58

BOOK REVIEWS

Talkin' Moscow Blues, by Josef Škvorecký ..... Rick Marin 45
Landslide, by Jane Mayer and Doyle McManus .... Fred Barnes 46
A Life, by Elia Kazan ..... Lionel Abel 48
Heavy Drinking, by Herbert Fingarette ..... Peter Skerry 49
The Kirov Affair, by Adam Ulam ..... Joseph Shattan 50
Beyond Good Intentions, by Doug Bandow ..... Herbert Schlossberg 51
George B. McClellan, by Stephen W. Sears ..... Joe Mysak 52

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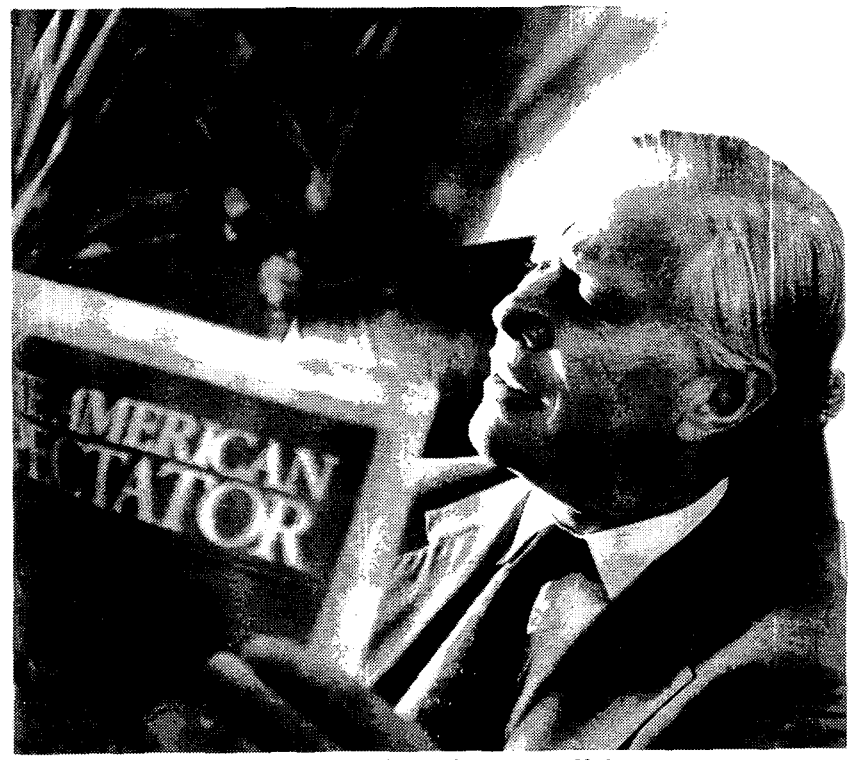

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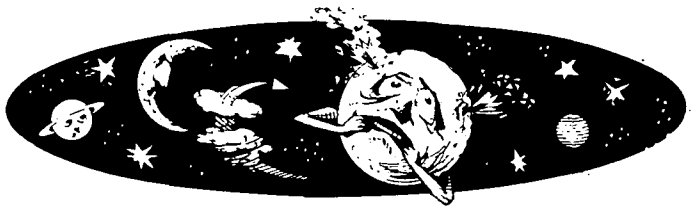


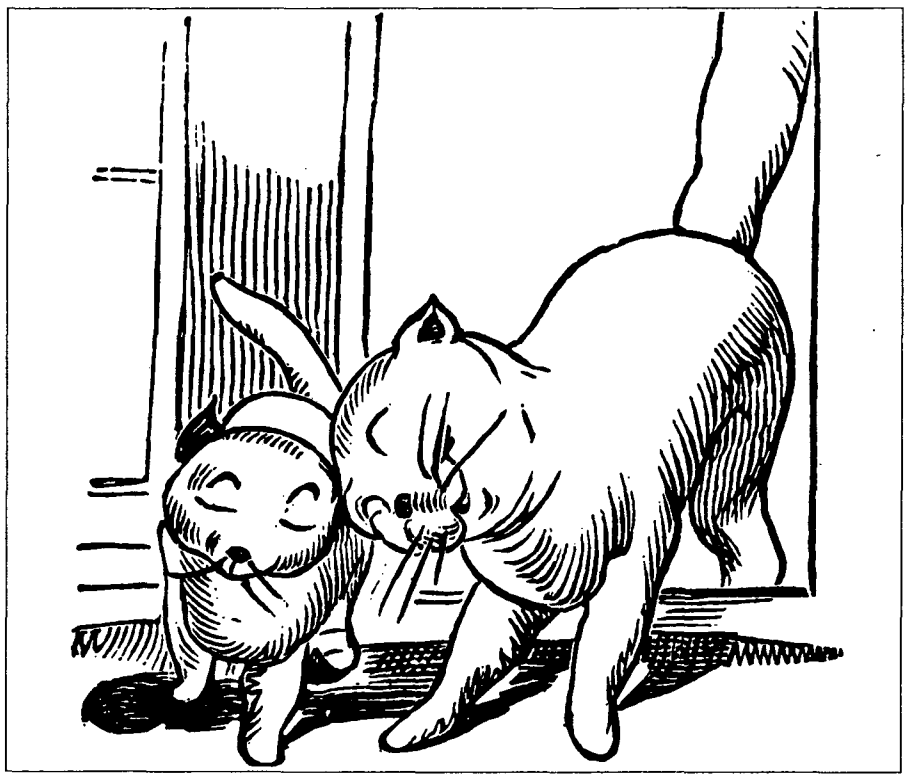
•October ends with the usual grinning pumpkin leering into the faces of children with outstretched hands, and with the streets of San Francisco populated by men wearing only diapers and carrying baseball bats. Hence there remain but two months more in the year-long solemnizing of 1968, an appalling year but one over which numerous 1960s youth blubber. It was the year of the barricades and dope and the naming of one's love child not with standard Christian monikers but with such names as Amerika, Rainbow, Sundance, and poor Trout Fishing in America, who for twenty years now has been an inducement to laughter wherever he goes. Doubtless these victims of 1968 would agree with an elderly sophisticate from a still earlier era, who in the quiet of is mid-town Manhattan study averred that more amusing and mellifluous names might be found in the annals of pathology—consider: Psoriasis Potter, Colitis du Pont, Pneumonia Trublefield III, or Appendicitis Hochbaum.

•As Campaign '88 wound down, the Democrats continued to charge the Bush campaign with McCarthyism, racism, and mudslinging. Nonetheless, Governor Michael Dukakis's candidacy suffered rigor mortis even before October ended, though in the event that he triumphs the *Madisonville News* of Madisonville, Tennessee, has turned up a man sufficiently articulate and candid to serve as President Dukakis's White House spokesman. The man, whose name is being withheld, is suing a Sweetwater, Tennessee fast-food restaurant for food poisoning. After dining at the establishment, he and his wife proceeded to Madisonville, where he told reporters, "I messed all over myself. It ran down my pants leg and into my boots." The couple stopped at the Magic Mart to freshen up: "I walked in there smelling like a dead dog." According to the *News*, even after getting himself cleaned up, the man said, he and his wife had to roll down the windows of their car "because the odor was so bad." Said President Dukakis's future spokesman: "My wife wanted to go to the Wal-Mart, so we stopped there and I waited in the car." But he needed to use the department store's facilities, and "as soon as I walked in the door, there it went again . . . all down my pants legs and into my boots." This was particularly embarrassing because witnesses laughed at him. The restaurant has "offered me a free meal or my money back, but that's not enough for what I went through." He might also make an excellent chairman at the Consumer Products Safety Commission.

•On October 2, the crew of the space shuttle *Discovery* intoned a testimonial to their ill-fated predecessors who perished aboard *Challenger*, and the next day they departed outer space for a 12:37 p.m. EDT landing at Andrews Air Force Base, where Vice President George Bush gave them an official and chastely non-political greeting. Celebrations got underway commemorating the first century of T. S. Eliot, poet and banker. Mr. David Corn had two articles published in one issue of the *Nation*. And a University of Notre Dame adjunct professor, under the delusion that he possessed magical powers, burned out an area of his classroom while attempting to maintain the attention of his students with a "flaming hand trick." No one was injured.

•Another retired high school teacher has been found living in a house overrun with cats and befouled with feces. In Gilroy, California, Mr. James Merrill, who taught history at Gilroy High School until 1987, was slapped with three citations and ordered out of his house by authorities who found it overrun by cats and so odoriferous that they had to wear breathing equipment in approaching it. "I've seen some bad but nothing like this," said Mr. Alfonso Yanez, a celebrated Santa Clara County animal control officer. And Mr. Al Burlson, one of Mr. Merrill's unfortunate neighbors, testified that Mr. Merrill "kept to himself and used to do his gardening while whistling Brahms." Let the National Education Association live this one down! In Tibet a Chinese soldier accosted Miss Kris Tait, a British tourist, and nearly tore her "Sergeant Bilko" T-shirt from her, thinking that the glabrous head of the late American comedian Phil Silvers was actually the head of the Dalai Lama. Pope John Paul II's appearance before the European Parliament was interrupted by boisterous protests from Northern Ireland's Rev. Ian Paisley. The Rev. Paisley was especially annoyed by the Pope's certitude about transubstantiation.

•In Hungary young people are again free to become Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. The local Communist Party has banned the Scouts for forty years in that confusingly named country. In the United States, however, the forces of uplift are in a fury with the Scouts. Animal Rights leaders in Harrisonburg, Pennsylvania, want local Scout leaders dismissed from scouting and charged with cruelty to animals for instructing Scouts on how to kill and prepare rabbits for eating—always a disgusting act that, and they accorded similar treatment to five chickens! Yes, the Scouts actually ate chickens! United Press International reported that the legendary "Fainting Goats" of Tennessee are becoming popular household pets nationwide. The goats, when startled, stiffen and collapse owing to a condition known as "myotonia" that has afflicted them for over a century. Mr. Larry Perryman, a farmer in Shelbyville, Tennessee, who has shipped the goats to the far reaches of the Republic, claims that the goats are being purchased by people who see them as "oddities." They like to have their friends over and startle their pet goats. The goats pass out on the kitchen floor and everyone has a good time for thirty or so seconds before the goats come to. Then they startle the goats again. Mr. Perryman's business is particularly brisk on Manhattan's Upper East Side.



•In Chile, General Augusto Pinochet lost his bid to rule Chile until 1997. A New York state grand jury reported an "avalanche" of evidence demonstrating that Miss Tawana Brawley probably was not kidnapped, sexually mistreated, covered with canine excrement, and emblazoned with racial slurs by the IRA or any other nefarious organization in Wappinger Falls, New York. Later in the month, Miss Brawley announced that she was desirous of becoming a Muslim and would leave the area to try her luck elsewhere. And in a follow-up to a story first reported here last July, Miss Guadelupe Rodriguez of Los Angeles pled guilty to baking her boyfriend's pet parrot in a 450-degree oven after arguing with him. No details of the recipe were given in court records, though it is known that Miss Rodriguez favors a low-salt diet.

•In religious news, Aboriginal leaders of Australia's Gumatj tribe have invoked tribal laws to thwart local authorities attempting to destroy a saltwater crocodile that ate one of the tribe's members. The saltwater crocodile is held to be sacred by the Gumatj as well as an excellent birth control device. And the Rev. Carl Thitchener is back in the news. The Rev. Mr. Thitchener made an appearance on this page in February 1987 when he an-

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nounced to his Unitarian Universalist congregation in Amherst, New York, that he would dispense free condoms at their next church service, only to have it divulged in local newspapers that he had a substantial police record including convictions on charges of drunk driving, assault, disorderly conduct, and exposure of his genitalia to the public gaze. Now the *Buffalo News* reports that the Rev. is growing increasingly indignant about AIDS and intends to lash out against the appalling disease in his Sunday services. Three people were killed by vampire bats in Bogota, Colombia, and the mayor of Sao Paulo, Brazil has banned string bikinis, which is not as harsh as it might sound. Sao Paulo has no beaches.

•In Lakeland, Florida, a precocious first-grade boy probably will not be allowed back to school after he pulled a .38-caliber handgun on two female classmates and demanded sexual favors. The 100th Congress adjourned at 3:17 a.m. on October 22 after spending still more money that the mean tax payers refuse to bankroll. Joyce Brown, the homeless lady who successfully fought involuntary hospitalization in New York City and lectured at the Harvard Law School, pled guilty to a disorderly conduct charge after being arrested and charged with possession of a hypodermic needle and a small quantity of heroin. In Stockholm, King Carl Gustaf was denied his request for a special parking permit allowing him to speed up his stops at the grocery and the dry cleaners. And the lonely campaign of Mrs. Louise Welling of Vicksburg, Michigan, may end in success after all. Mrs. Welling is the intrepid shopper who spotted Mr. Elvis Presley standing in checkout line Number 2 at Felpausch's Supermarket in Vicksburg. While the renowned singer, widely assumed to be interred on the grounds of his Tennessee estate, fumbled nervously with change to pay for an electrical fuse, Mrs. Welling lost all power of speech. Mr. Presley fled before Mrs. Welling could sound the alarm, but now she has the nation's tabloids enlisted in her campaign to find Elvis, and *The American Spectator* is asking President Reagan to convene a presidential panel headed by Professor Irving Kristol to determine where Mr. Presley is living and why he has treated Mrs. Welling so rudely. *—RET*

CORRESPONDENCE

Correction

Of course, I should know better, Senator James Danforth Quayle isn't a III and can't be one because his father's name is James C. Quayle ("Rooting for Quayle," *TAS*, November 1988). The bogus numeral is appended by populists like Mike Royko who seem to regard any sign of lineage as proof of unwarranted privilege. In point of fact, the senator was named in memory of a Deke friend of his father's, who died valiantly in WW II. Obviously, things have reached a pretty pass when even a former fellow townsman can't get the matter right. But that has been Dan Quayle's lot all through the plaguey campaign: seldom has a decent man in public life—not since Robert Bork—been treated so shabbily. Hereafter, if this sort of blackguarding keeps up, it's going to be awfully hard to persuade less than perfect persons from Huntington, Indiana to run for high office. Which may not be such a bad idea after all.

—Kent Owen
Bloomington, Indiana

Down with Downey

I've been reading in every rag in the country that Morton Downey represents "true conservatism" until I'm sick in the head. I suppose it was inevitable that a conservative magazine would jump on the bandwagon; it's a shame it had to be the *Spectator*, double so that the perpetrator was Richard Marin, who usually shows a lot more sense ("Downey's Syndrome," *TAS*, August 1988).

I don't buy it. Being from New Jersey, the epicenter of this particular firestorm, and involved in the conservative movement here, I can say that the general opinion is that Downey is more or less what he appears to be: a guy who, having spent the last two decades scuffling on the edge of the entertainment business, has finally found a gimmick, namely yelling "liberal" at the top of his lungs while shaking his fist at anybody he doesn't like. In other words, the talk-show equivalent of Monday night wrestling, complete with T-shirts and howling mob.

What Downey is doing is simply giving the left another bogeyman to point at and say, "This is a conservative, how do you like him?" This trick has been pulled plenty of times before, as see Joe Pyne, Archie Bunker, and, yeah, Joe McCarthy. Consider the image: rude, threatening, loud-mouthed, and anti-intellectual. Consider the audience: the same pack of yokels that trot down to the local raceway (a big sponsor, by the way) to gape at cars being crushed. The "Wall Street suits and Rutgers minicons" don't change this any; a red neck remains red whether it's covered by a yachting jacket or a Mort T-shirt. And finally, consider the technique. What Downey does is to sit his guests down in a set that gives the distinct impression of being an inquisitorial chamber, rattle them sufficiently through insults, shouting, and arm-waving that they lose whatever shreds of dignity they may have brought with them, and then turn the crowd loose. That he then begins to act like the Voice of Reason in moderating the proceedings doesn't impress me one iota; this is the oldest demagogic trick in the book, as Mr. Marin should be well aware. I have watched the program perhaps a half-dozen times since it went on the air, and I have yet to see an argument presented in any kind of coherent manner. The guests aren't allowed to do this, and Downey himself isn't interested.

If this is conservatism, I'm a Menshevik.

Let's keep in mind that by taking the adage "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" too literally, conservatives have managed to shoot themselves in the foot more often than not. We have enough trouble with our public image without adopting a man who presents mindless belligerence as typical of the movement. Conservatives at large ought to take their cue from Joisey and wash their hands of this particular clown as soon as possible—last week wouldn't be quick enough.

It might be worthwhile to continue watching the show, though, if only to see who it is who finally works up enough backbone to take a crack at the Mouth. Not that this will be an easy matter now that Mort has allied himself with the Guardian Angels, who act as "bodyguards" on the set—another item that Mr. Marin might want to think about.

—J. R. Dunn
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Lefebvritis

Why did *TAS* assign or allow Charlotte Low Allen, who has already shown her coolness toward traditional Catholics, to report on a "Lefebvrite" parish ("Circumschism," *TAS*, September 1988)? What should we expect next? J. K. Galbraith or Robert Lekachman with the definitive review of Reaganomics? Randall Robinson on Jonas Savimbi?

The writer brought her contempt with her, and found what she wanted to find. Nothing exposes the writer like her choice of modifiers. Attending the Mass was an "eerie experience." The traditional movement is "gruesome." Her representative parishioner was "an elderly man in a shiny suit." Get the point? Too bad she couldn't find someone in a polyester leisure suit or a matron with a blue rinse. Ms. Low (or is it Ms. Allen, or Ms. Low Allen?) also pondered the high proportion of young people. Was she disappointed? Was she hoping to find nothing but older cranks left behind by modernity, exhaling their resentments against change? Another parishioner didn't just list traditionalist objections to the Novus Ordo words of consecration, he "solemnly" assured the writer of them, evidently reminding her of the wide-eyed way every crackpot explains his personal demon.

Naturally, such dim bulbs have never, like the writer, read Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, but they have read the Catechism of the Council of Trent and what it says about the consecration formula. If certain "nuances" give the writer a headache, better minds than hers have fought over them. Forget for now the fact that St. Athanasius has no formal relationship with Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and is therefore untouched by any "excommunication." The parishioners there do indeed reject the validity of the action against Lefebvre, because neither the scorn of the world nor an army of post-conciliar canon lawyers will ever convince them to abandon the 2,000-year-old faith. The "denial" she sees in traditionalist behavior is not the classic first stage of grief. It is a denial of the idea that we must prove our obedience to the Pope by denying that faith, or that we must follow the hierarchy in its embrace of the modernism condemned as the synthesis of all heresies by St. Pius X.

Yes, we traditionalists sometimes are a gloomy lot. And why not? We've seen the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the most beautiful thing this side of heaven, turned into a Protestant communal gathering utterly devoid of majesty, and totally oriented to flattering man rather than worshipping God. We've seen pews emptied, seminaries closed, and homosexuals afforded more "dignity" (pun intended) than traditional Catholics.

Yes, we believe the way to hell is wide and the way to heaven is narrow, and that more people lose their souls than save them. But to compare us to

(continued on page 53)

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EDITORIALS

THAT SCOUNDREL BUSH

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

October 19, 1988

This presidential election demonstrates a political truth long kept from the eyes of the American people. Even learned professors of the political science do not discuss it, which, given their garrulity, is astonishing. Apparently it is a truth that is just too hot to handle—to wit, though American liberals deplore the sordidness of their conservative opponents, they usually get the conservatives of their choice.

Now, with George Bush's lead over Michael Dukakis swelling, the liberals accuse him of campaigning on the "low road." They charge him with mudslinging. Lamented the Hon. Lloyd Bentsen in Los Angeles the other day, "I don't think we ever imagined that George Bush . . . would be so willing to debase that precious currency of our democracy by conducting a campaign that resembles a demagogic race for county sheriff."

Michael Dukakis has even implicated Bush in McCarthyism, though Bush has identified no Communists in the State Department and seems to share this administration's happy notion that there are only a few left in Moscow. As the liberals' charges accumulate, the emerging portrait of the erstwhile moderate, George Bush, is one of a very nasty, devious epigone of that fabulous liberal *bete noir*, Richard Milhous Nixon.

Is Bush really the diabolical figure that the liberals would have us believe? How can a wimp so rapidly transform himself into such a hard case? The answer is quite simple: he cannot, and he has not. Here in the last rounds of a grueling campaign wherein Bush was pronounced politically dead after the Iowa caucus, unlikely to survive a summer of bad polls and the Iran-contra scandal, and a goner 17 points behind the whiz kid Dukakis, Bush remains what he has been all his adult life, a gentleman eager for public service.

Yet the liberals continue to lay dark charges against him. In time they will have created the conservative of their choice, or more precisely the illusion of such a conservative, and that illusion will rouse their colossal indignation. Watch—so objectionable will Bush become in their imagination that principled disagreement with him will be impossible. A review of the liberals' response to past conservative leaders reveals that for them there are only two kinds: the scoundrels such as Nixon, and the lightweights such as Gerald Ford and he who from the White House now presides over the longest period of peace-time growth in the postwar period.

From the charges against him it appears that Bush will be marked down as a scoundrel. I say laugh it off, George. You have run a competent and admirable campaign. How were you to know that liberals would suddenly adjudge it a low blow to be called liberal? For years they have been positively vain about their liberalism. Now they seem to suffer from what the doctors of the Freudian mysteries call "low self-esteem." They should think better of themselves. There is nothing wrong with being a liberal except that it reminds Americans of high taxes, imperious social engineering, a queasy economy, and open season on United States embassies. Had Bush truly taken the "low road" he might have made more of the criminal behavior of Dukakis's top education adviser in Massachusetts, Mrs. Dukakis's medical history, and unsubstantiated reports of the Governor's own illnesses. Instead Bush raised issues that the experts said would work against him, for instance, military spending and foreign policy. He, as a *New York Times*/CBS News Poll reported in mid-September, changed the election "into a contest about his issue."

That is what Democrats call leadership, when they achieve it. When a Republican does, it is "demagogic." Bah. When Bush calls Dukakis a liberal he is summoning his opponent to campaign on the highest level, that is to say on the level of ideas and principles. To their great credit, liberals of a generation ago were ardent to discuss such lofty stuff. Now their heirs take refuge in calling Bush a name-caller. Obviously the electorate sees through this infantile deception. When the gentlemanly Bush is inaugurated forty-first President of the United States, liberals will have one source of consolation: the American people elected another scoundrel. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

BRING BACK TIP!

October 5, 1988

In this election year the Democratic party apparently intends to become the party of silence, which is a refreshingly different approach to campaigning. Its leaders will not talk about the liberalism of their presidential candidate, and they reproach George Bush for "mudslinging" when he identifies Michael S. Dukakis correctly as a life-long liberal. Then they lament the vacuity of the campaign. Yet if they would admit to Dukakis's philosophy and campaign on his liberal beliefs the campaign would not be vacuous. Admittedly, owing to the American people's disesteem for liberalism he would lose, but at least he would lose after having said what he thinks is important—namely, more government programs, more social engineering such as affirmative action, higher taxes, and whatever vapor now constitutes liberal foreign policy.

Another thing that the Democrats are remaining steadfastly silent about is their Speaker of the House. Again, it would probably do them no good with the voters if they did speak about him and his appalling behavior. Yet unlike their situation with candidate Dukakis, the Democrats have a remedy for the folly of Speaker Wright: They can bring back Tip O'Neill. Up in Democratic Massachusetts surely a way can be found to return Tip to the House, so that the Democrats can again glow over their noble Speaker rather than refuse comment on his growing list of calamities.

Even now Speaker Wright is sweating before a House ethics inquiry over his alleged financial chicanery and misuse of influence. The Hon. O'Neill never suffered such indignities in the

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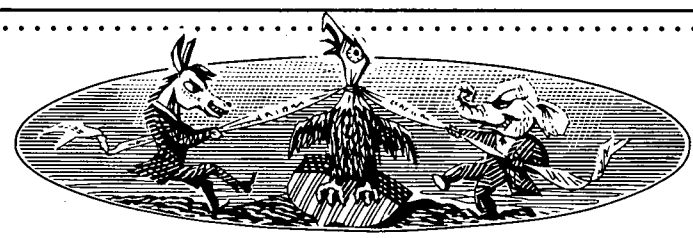
name of Democratic statecraft. Speaker Wright is accused of vaingloriously conducting his own gimcrack foreign policy from room 1236 of the Longworth House Office Building. Partisan Republicans may have thought the Hon. O'Neill guilty of trespassing upon the President's foreign policy domain, but Tip never got into an airplane and flew into enemy territory to attack his government. Finally, I cannot recall ever hearing of Tip's blurting out classified intelligence, as Speaker Wright is accused of having done on September 20, when at a press conference he pronounced, "We have received clear testimony from CIA people that they have deliberately done things to provoke an overreaction on the part of the government in Nicaragua."

Whether or not Speaker Wright, in this infelicitous logorrhea, betrayed classified information is now the subject of yet another investigation by the House Ethics Committee, all of whose members are getting to know Speaker Wright intimately. No Speaker has ever spent so much time before them—nor, for that matter, have many congressmen not now convicted of felonious acts.

Speaker Wright argues that his information did not come from classified sources but from the public record. Others argue that he got the information from classified sources but that his presentation of it was confused. American policy was not to provoke "overreaction" by the Sandinistas against Nicaragua's democratic opposition but to assist the opposition en route to peacefully creating democracy in Nicaragua, as was called for in the Guatemala peace accords of 1987, which Wright himself endorsed and applauded. Then again, others argue that there was no American policy for assisting Nicaraguan democrats.

Presumably the Ethics Committee will decide the legality of Speaker Wright's September 20 utterances. The impropriety of these utterances has already been established. In his passion to scotch the Reagan Administration policy toward Nicaragua and to ingratiate himself with the left-wing of his party, Wright has shown reckless disregard for the liberties and for the lives of the Nicaraguan democratic opposition. One of the leaders of that opposition, Mario Rappaccioli, warned that Speaker Wright "should know that any allegation of ties between this United States agency [CIA] and any Nicaraguan citizen means virtual death, in the form of a 30-year jail sentence. It is not necessary that the ties exist, only that someone say that they exist." Surely Tip O'Neill has brains enough to realize that Speaker Wright's yawp encourages Sandinista repression. And so not only in America but in Nicaragua too the cry goes up: "Bring back Tip!" □

CAPITOL IDEAS



OPERATION RESCUE

by Tom Bethell

Recently I attended an Operation Rescue in the Bay Area. I can only say that those who have not done so may find it difficult to grasp the intensity and power of the abortion issue in American life today. Above all other issues it exposes deep and unbridgeable fault lines in our society. I also spent a great deal of time this summer with anti-abortion activists in San Francisco and this much I can say: For them abortion is the *only* issue, politically speaking. If Governor Michael Dukakis had sought their vote by taking a more persuasively pro-life stance than that of Vice President George Bush, then they would have voted for Dukakis even though they disagreed with him on *everything* else—taxes, strategic defense, the death penalty. That intensity is what makes the pro-life movement politically potent. No doubt most pro-lifers support the Bush position on these other issues, but there are also a good many in the movement whose natural home is the Democratic party and who would be happy to rejoin it if only its presidential candidate opposed abortion.

It is worth noting that Operation Rescue's *modus operandi* is essentially conspiratorial, something liberals should ponder; they tend to be so scornful of conspiracy theories, after all. A conspiracy is a secret agreement to spring an illegal surprise. (One must add the word illegal, lest football huddles and surprise parties count as conspiracies.) Operation Rescue has found that the identity of the abortion clinic targeted for blockading must be kept secret until the last minute. The purpose of the exercise is to keep the clinic closed throughout the sit-in. But if police know the target beforehand they can arrive in force ahead of the protesters and keep it open.

The Operation Rescue I attended was organized by members of an evangelical church in San Jose, fifty miles south of San Francisco. On the night before the sit-in about 200 people met at the church. Those planning to be arrested the next day were given instructions as to what to wear, what I.D. to carry, how to behave, and so on. In the parking lot outside the church about a dozen pro-abortion demonstrators shrieked insults at the arriving church members.

I spent the night at the nearby house of Arthur J. Brew, a retired CIA man who now works more or less full time for the anti-abortion cause and contributes articles on the subject to the *Wanderer*. At 6 o'clock the next morning we all gathered once again at the church parking lot, and this time we drove off in convoy to a destination known only to those in the lead vehicle.

As we drove north up Interstate 280 I noticed that in the middle of the convoy was a Honda with three of the pro-abortion women who had been demonstrating the evening before. They were planning to arrive at the site along with the rest of us. There they would phone their friends, ensuring the presence of a counter-demonstration. I was impressed by their zeal. They must have been up at 5 a.m., having bellowed themselves hoarse the night before. We kept right on going past exit after exit, and I assumed the target was an abortion clinic in Babylon itself. But we turned off at Daly City, just south of San Francisco, and the pro-lifers were dropped off outside a Planned Parenthood clinic near the Southgate shopping center. About a hundred people immediately sat down and blockaded the entrance. Psalters had been distributed the night before; soon all were singing hymns. They had arrived ahead of the police. Planned Parenthood was not due to open for another half hour.

The pro-abortion women arrived almost immediately, scurrying along with their placards and banners. One went to a pay phone, and within an hour there were about twenty of them, shouting incessantly at the top of their lungs. One placard read: "Fight For Women's Liberation and Socialist Revolution." Another: "Dump the Democrats. We Need a Workers' Party—Revolutionary Workers' League."

Police from all over San Mateo County began to assemble; paddy wagons drove up. But the police seemed to be taking their time. This was a Saturday morning—most abortions are apparently scheduled on Saturdays—and off-duty police presumably had to be called at home. The pro-life forces were ten-deep in front of the clinic. Ann Colby, the executive director of the clinic, fashionably dressed, showed up with two assistants. (How much money do these people make, by the way? How much do abortionists earn? These are questions one never sees addressed by the news media.) Colby carried a package labeled Kendall Curity and another "disposable latex gloves." I asked her how many abortions were scheduled that day. She referred me to her "surgical services director," who said eleven. Colby said their fee for an abortion was "on a sliding scale," means-tested, up to a maximum of about $250. About ten percent are paid for by MediCal—that is, by California taxpayers. She was obviously uncomfortable: on the defensive. "I wish they would put their energies into something else," she said, "like better research into birth control."

"RANDALL TERRY, WE ARE HERE, ANGRY WOMEN THAT YOU FEAR," the counter-demonstrators were howling over and over. This was a reference to the 29-year-old evangelical minister (and one-time used car salesman) from Binghamton, N.Y., who

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*

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founded Operation Rescue a year ago.

Joan Andrews, who two years ago was sentenced to five years in prison for attempting (unsuccessfully) to unplug a machine used to suck fetuses from their mothers' wombs, and was only in the last month released from a Florida prison, wrote to Richard Cowden-Guido *à propos* the 1973 Supreme Court decision overturning state anti-abortion laws: "I awaited the uprising of the Catholic Church. But that did not come."[1] And so the leadership of the anti-abortion movement passed, by default, into other hands, primarily now evangelical Christians who may in some respect lack sophistication but whose great merit is that they do not crave the good opinion of the *New York Times* (unlike influential segments of the American Catholic hierarchy).

The worst offender has been Cardinal Joseph Bernadin of Chicago, whose statements urging a "consistent ethic of life" have actually undermined the pro-life movement. Those who oppose abortion (the cardinal has illogically insisted) should also oppose nuclear weapons, capital punishment, poverty, and what Catholic writer James Hitchcock has called a "seemingly quite elastic list of other issues." Bernadin was even quoted in the *Village Voice* as repudiating Archbishop John O'Connor's 1984 statement that Catholics could hardly in good conscience vote for a pro-abortion politician (such as Geraldine Ferraro). The effect of Bernadin's attempt to blend a leftist agenda into the anti-abortion cause under the rubric of "life issues" has been to confuse Catholics, help the Democrats, and, no doubt, lend a measure of aid and comfort to abortionists across the land.

There have been praiseworthy exceptions, notably Auxiliary Bishop Austin Vaughan of New York, who has been arrested several times at Operation Rescue sit-ins. He recently said that the country is being "corrupted" by abortion. A good number of protesters at Daly City were Catholics, among them two priests from San Francisco.

The first two women who showed up that morning for "procedures," the euphemism for abortions now preferred by abortionists (who prefer to be called doctors), were black, and they were the only clinic clients I saw. One sat nonchalantly on the hood of a parked automobile fifty yards or so from the demonstration, looking with moderate indifference towards the two factions battling for her mind and soul, one group singing and praying, the other by now screaming with awesome ferocity. There was something shocking about her comparative lack of interest in those warring over her. She just sat there puffing on a cigarette and refused to listen to a sidewalk counselor trying to talk her out of having a "procedure." Her attitude suggested that she was merely irritated that the demonstration would delay her schedule for the day. Perhaps she had planned a shopping spree after her abortion, and now that would have to be postponed. Maybe she would even have to go elsewhere for her procedure.

A woman with a placard around her neck walked by. "I still mourn the death of my unborn baby," it read. "He would have been 18 years old. Died in a NYC clinic, 1970."

The harridans howled: "RACISTS, SEXISTS, ANTI-GAY, BORN-AGAIN BIGOTS, GO AWAY!"

The sitting protesters began to sing "America the Beautiful." The black woman, who may not have been more than 18 years old, took another puff on her cigarette and said she was "pissed off." She refused to give her name. (According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute, 31.4 percent of women having abortions in the U.S. are black. An Operation Rescue spokesman said that

[1]See *You Reject Them, You Reject Me: The Prison Letters of Joan Andrews*, published in 1988 by Trinity Communications, Manassas, Virginia.

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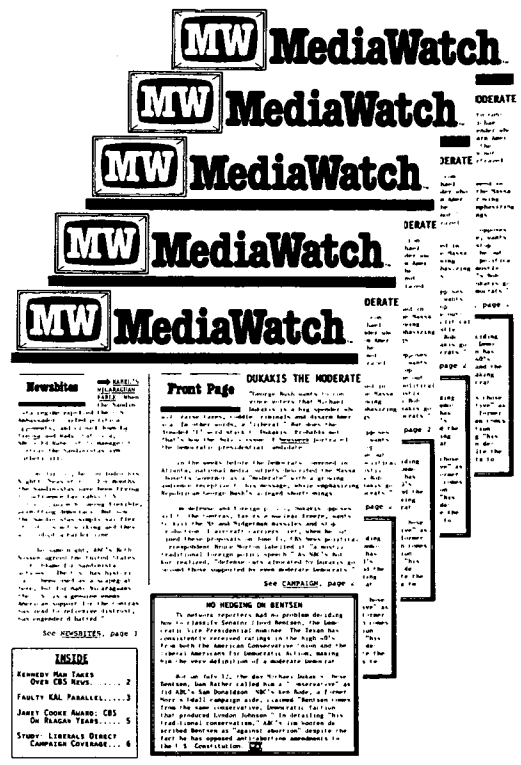

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blacks account for 40 percent of Atlanta's abortions.)

"FREE AND LEGAL, ON DEMAND, ABORTION RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE LAND!"

"America, America, God mend thine every flaw. Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law."

"Does one of you believe in liberty?" a counter-demonstrator shouted. About 30 years old, he told me that someone had phoned him in Berkeley to tell him about the sit-in. He had come immediately, on the double, to help the abortion cause. He was wearing a button that read: "Another Jew For Jesse."

"It's a disgrace to hear you singing that song," he shouted at the sitters. "You don't believe in freedom!" Then he started berating the police. "Knock heads! Get 'em outta here! This is like a love-in. This is embarrassing." He told me the police would have been far rougher if these had been "peace" protesters trying to shut down a military base.

The police indeed were courteous and polite, as they were two months later at a larger Operation Rescue in San Francisco itself. In Atlanta, by contrast, where about 500 Operation Rescue participants were arrested in the first week of October, there were many complaints of police brutality, and according to Mary Meehan, whose coverage of the protests for the *National Catholic Register* has been among the best, "lawyers are gathering evidence for a federal lawsuit against Atlanta authorities, charging them with civil rights violations in their October 4 treatments of O.R. participants."

Eventually 135 protestors were carried away by San Mateo police and the Daly City clinic opened for business by about noon. Jeff White of Operation Rescue later wrote: "Four women and their unborn children were escorted to alternative pregnancy centers. . . . We have good reason to believe that the women entering the mill after the rescuers were removed were posing as clients. No abortionist was seen either entering or leaving the mill. Although the death peddlers claim they eventually opened that afternoon, they did not answer the phone throughout the day."

A few days before the nationwide Operation Rescue at the end of October, about 7,000 people had been arrested at sit-ins around the country this year, more than double the total for the previous twelve years combined. Which shows what a little leadership will do. According to participants I have spoken to, press reports have downplayed the number of clergymen arrested. Mary Meehan thought the recent Atlanta arrests included fifty ministers and priests. Among them was Anglican Catholic Bishop James O. Mote of Denver, who spent a week in an Atlanta prison. He told me that religious services were not permitted inside, but that a Catholic priest, Fr. Norman Weslin, nonetheless did say Mass with bread and wine smuggled in. But on October 11 guards appeared in the middle of Mass and Fr. Weslin was thrown into solitary confinement. When last heard of he was still there.

"This is like something you'd hear out of the Soviet Union," said Julie Loesch, who is with Operation Rescue in Atlanta.

Ron Maxson, who works for Operation Rescue in San Francisco, said that he thought there were more American clergymen in U.S. jails this summer and fall than Russian clergymen in Soviet jails.

• • •

Many thanks to all of you who sent letters on the "missing conservative generation" in U.S. political life (see "New Orleans Spells No Real News," *TAS*, October). They included many interesting thoughts and observations, and I will discuss some of the points raised in a future column—I hope in the next issue. □

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Joe Queenan

CHARACTER ASSASSINS

Today's short-story writers think life in America is dull, and so they fill their work with weirdos—the sort of folk they met at those fabled writers' workshops in Iowa.

It is the year 2087 and the only record of our civilization is the short stories of Ann Beattie, Raymond Carver, Leonard Michaels, and Grace Paley. Cultural anthropologists are in big, big trouble.

They're in trouble because they can't figure out how a civilization renowned for its technological prowess, innovativeness in health care, and astonishing ability to create large sums of wealth ever managed to get rolling. They can't find any engineers, physicists, systems analysts, economists, investment bankers, or even managing editors. All they find are losers, drunks, wackos, addicts, failures, creeps, loners, schlemiels, and people who can't get tenure. There's also absolutely no one in this fictional world who could do your taxes.

Try as they might, the social scientists of the future will never be able to figure out who ran the IBM System 360s, who designed the multi-purpose stadiums, or who got the unmanned space flights into orbit. They'll never figure out who bought all those season tickets, shojis, and minicams, or what the laptop computers were for. They'll also never figure out who opened all those enormously profitable franchises. The fictional characters they'll be encountering couldn't open a Coke.

Contempt or indifference toward white-collar types is only one half of the equation. The proletariat gets pretty short shrift here, too; you have to turn to Louis Auchincloss to find a world with fewer plumbers, ditchdiggers, locksmiths, or seamstresses. The closest you come to sympathetic service sector employees are the Beattie characters waiting on tables while studying for their Ph.D.s in psych. That and the taxicab drivers who occasionally pop by to drive someone to the abortionist.

I know all this because I spent two weeks doing a job profile of the fictional characters in the work of Beattie, Carver, Paley, and Michaels, whom I think of as a sort of club, in that readers who like one of the four tend to like them all. And vice versa. I also delved into the stories of their co-conspirators: Joyce Carol Oates, Margaret Atwood, Tobias Wolff, Richard Ford, and Cynthia Ozick. It was a Bureau of Labor Statistics nightmare, beginning with Carver, whose three books of stories are a virtually uninterrupted paean to bozos. Listen to these hypnotically seductive opening lines:

My marriage had just fallen apart. I couldn't find a job. I had another girl. But she wasn't in town. So I was at a bar having a glass of beer.

I was out of work.

Earl Ober was between jobs as a salesman.

Sandy's husband has been on the sofa ever since he'd been terminated three months ago.

Not having a job isn't the only problem these charmers have. Here are some more crisp openers:

J.P. and I are on the front porch at Frank Martin's drying-out facility.

Carlyle was in a spot. He'd been in a spot all summer, since early June when his wife had left him.

This blind man, an old friend of my wife's, was on his way to spend the night. His wife had just died.

The woman was called Miss Dent, and earlier that evening, she'd held a gun on a man. She'd made him get down in the dirt and plead for his life.

L.D.'s wife, Maxine, had told him to get out the night she came home from work and found L.D. drunk again and being abusive to Rae, their fifteen-year-old.

A man without hands came to the door to sell me a photograph of my house.

As Al saw it, there was only one solution. He had to get rid of the dog without Betty or the kids finding out about it.

Job descriptions? Well, there are a few salesmen, a postman, a guy who cleans houses and babysits, lots of waitresses, a baker, and a hairstylist. There's one doctor and one engineer, but *he*'s out of work. Indeed, finding out what kind of work the engineer is out of is a real rarity in Carver, where it's usually enough to say, "They were laying off at Aerojet when they should be hiring," and let the reader figure out what Aerojet is and who they were laying off. With all this bitching and moaning to do, who's got time for details?

I had a job and Patti didn't. I worked a few hours a night for the hospital. It was a nothing job. I did some work, signed the card for eight hours, went drinking with the nurses.

Two things I'll say for Carver, though: at least there are garter belts and office parties in his work. Nobody enjoys the parties, and the women don't look good in the garter belts, but at least they make an effort.

There are no garter belts in the work of Grace Paley, and no office parties either. As with Carver, jobs are kind of hard to come by. In the first story in *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute*, we learn that the narrator's husband had "a good job." We never find out what it is, but he had one. He is not unlike the man who makes "a very good salary" or the man with "a responsible job." (This is literary shorthand for "schmuck.") There is a loony cop, a guy who runs something called JoMar Plastics, and an immigrant who works hard but ends up in an insane asylum anyway. Take that, Neil Diamond.

Mostly, people in Paley don't have jobs at all. Instead, they go to the park. But not to get cheered up:

When I went to the playground in the afternoon I met 11 unwed mothers on relief. Only four of them were whores, the rest of them were unwed on principle or because some creep had ditched them.

Joe Queenan is a writer for Barron's.

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Given the amount of time spent lounging in parks, I couldn't help thinking of the running joke in Alfred Hitchcock's *Family Plot*, where Bruce Dern has to keep leaving his wife Barbara Rush to investigate crimes by herself because he has to go to work and can't take time off, not even in a taut psychological thriller.

I read Paley's *Later the Same Day* to see if job opportunities improved. They didn't. There are the usual poets and teachers, a lawyer, a grocery store owner, a gynecologist, and an "unmarried vegetarian sinologist." Somebody is in the crafts business; a jilted lover bought shrubs; another joker screwed up in the pinball machine business. One man who seems to be running a successful business is a pharmacist, but a bunch of black people suddenly start picketing his store. Another story mentions a successful bookstore owner, but three years later he goes bankrupt. This is not unlike the guy in the Leonard Michaels story who buys a beauty parlor, only to have a union bomb it. In this literary neighborhood, entrepreneurs get the shaft every time.

Even when people have interesting careers, they are usually minor characters, and are often mentioned only parenthetically. The single group of professionals that does appear are doctors—mostly gynecologists. The protagonists rarely have identified jobs, and when they do they are not good ones. This does not come entirely as a surprise; given their dismal personalities, you wouldn't expect many of them to get heavily recruited for top management positions.

"There is a family nearly everybody knows," begins one Paley story. "The children of this family are Bibi, Doody, Dodo, Neddy, Yoyo, Butch, Put Put and Beep."

Sorry, our marketing division isn't hiring this week.

Go-getters are particularly scarce in Beattie's world of disgruntled artsy-crafties. In *Secrets and Surprises* we come across a "gaunt psychology professor," a shrink, another shrink, a grad-school dropout who worked in an office, a home-ec major, a woman taking a crafts class, a chemistry teacher, a poet, a painter, a marionette maker, a waitress, a man who used to be an English professor, a guy who had been denied tenure and who was teaching a night course in photography, some people who had been in grad school together, an instructor, a person from Bard, a person from Antioch, a clerk in a boutique in New Haven, a woman who thought that "maybe going back to school was the solution," a professor, a modern poet, a woman with a grant, two teachers, and a musician. Party animals all. The only characters who come close to having jobs in what those of us in the real world call the real world are a veterinarian, a guy who joins a stock club, and a "dad" who "had to work late." As in Carver and Paley, we never find out what he had to work late doing, or what the girl who worked in the office did in it. Nor do we find out whether the guy from the stock club ever made any money. You could never tell from reading Beattie that we occasionally have bull markets.

In *Where You'll Find Me*, it's more of the same. There's an artist's model, somebody who works in an artist's supply store, a paramedic, a rock guitarist, an undergraduate at Penn, another model, a photographer's assistant, a pre-med student, and a screenwriter. There *is* a surgeon—he had to help out with the miscarriage. In one story a husband gets transferred to Germany by his company, but you never find out who he works for or what he does. Another story describes a man who works for "a company." IBM? GTE? Bingo's Abattoir? On page 89 a real estate agent puts in a surprise appearance. I should point out that in polls of consumer attitudes, realtors are the only people who are more despised than lawyers. However, the pollsters never ask where the public ranks people who write for the *New Yorker*.

Beattie isn't the only writer who overpopulates her world with eggheads. The only two books by Joyce Carol Oates that I have ever read are *Solstice* and *The Hungry Ghosts*. The former has two characters: a teacher at a private school and an artist's widow; while the second consists of "seven allusive comedies," all of which are about academics. In Cynthia Ozick's *The Cannibal Galaxy*, the main characters are a private school principal, an "imagistic linguistic logician," and a supremely gifted artist. Hey, whatever happened to Beowulf? Or Grendel, for that matter? Okay, I suppose that teachers are a legitimate subject for fiction. I just don't think they're a legitimate subject for *this much* fiction. When writers start churning out books of "allusive comedies" that *only* deal with university types, they're really pushing it. Once upon a time, literature dealt with knights and knaves: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Now it deals with balding schmos who teach Creative Lit. We, as a people, have lost our way.

If Beattie is whiny, Carver funereal, and Paley mopey, they are all a day at the beach (Omaha) compared to Leonard Michaels. Michaels's fiction bristles with whores, cops, rapists, rapees, junkies, burglars, and transvestites. At the very end of *I Would Have Saved Them If I Could*, I did come upon a VW mechanic, but after the "monkey addicted to morphine," paralyzed child hit by a car, and "Miami bitch with gonorrhea," it was a case of too little too late. Indeed, in Michaels it's a bit pointless to ask the question, "What do these people do for a living?" because a bunch of people doing this much raping and suicide-attempting don't have time for something as mundane as work. Besides, who would hire them? Not even the transit authority would interview a character who says—in the first line of the book—

> When my uncle Moe dropped dead of a heart attack I became an expert in the subway system.

This line sets the general tone of the collection: by page 29 we've had dog excrement, bald women, one death, two rapes. There is also a building where you can smell *both* piss and rape; needless to say, it's a walkup. Later in the book there are murders, abortions, men getting dressed up in panties, vomit, bombings, and the chimp with a monkey on his back. Gosh, where did Michaels get his exposure to all these horrors? Hanoi? Belfast? No, but he *was* affiliated with the Institute for Creative Arts at the University of California.

On the theory that if you give a man enough petard he'll hoist himself on it, I backtracked to Michaels's earlier volume *Going Places* to see if a brighter, sunnier atmosphere had obtained. No way. The first story features a Turkish waiter who rapes a co-ed who subsequently commits suicide. Oh-oh, a leitmotif. There's a cop, a painter's assistant, a rabbi, and more grad students than you could shake a stick at, though you'd shake it anyway. Amidst numerous references to excreta and vomit, the author does mention Byron, Marx, and Trotsky, which is appropriate because none of them had steady jobs either. They were writers.

How did we reach this impasse? Who's to blame? Beats me, but names like Zola (obsession with grotesques), Cheever (personal malediction on anybody who was more than five bucks ahead of the game), and Steinbeck (hokey lionization of people going nowhere fast) all come to mind. So do the schools. A few years ago somebody wrote a book called *Harvard Hates America*. What we need today is a follow-up volume called *Princeton, Virginia, Iowa, Texas, Wisconsin, California, and Yes, Even Tiny Sarah Lawrence Hate America*, because that's where these writers teach, or have taught, and that's where young writers are being rehearsed to write about this country as if it were a dump. Or East Germany. Same difference.

The really worrying thing is that fave raves like Beattie and Carver are only the tip of a very unpleasant iceberg. Consider a *New York Times* review of Richard Ford's latest story collection, *Rock Springs*. Included in the line-up of can't-wait-till-I-meet-these-sweethearts was a woman "who's run through three husbands, changed her name, become a Scientologist, and is in a mental health unit," another woman who's hiding out from her husband's biker friends, a car thief, a guy who bounces bad checks, and an ex-con. The *Times* calls these stories "stunning." Another word might be "stupid." We all know that a gifted prose stylist can make diverting characters out of dirtballs and wackos, just as artists can make plausible artworks out of industrial debris. The question is: Who cares?

We all know that a gifted prose stylist can make diverting characters out of dirtballs and wackos, just as an artist can make plausible artworks out of industrial debris. The question is: Who cares?

The other question is: Is this stuff really a reflection of the society we live in, or are we all just slumming it? Are the people at your parties all Beattie-like pinheads? Is everyone you know between jobs the way they are in Carver? Is there anywhere near as much piss/shit/vomit in your life as there is in Michaels's? Seems to me that if gloom is your cup of tea, you can do a lot worse than this crew. Read the Russians. Read the South Americans. Read such professionally depressing writers as Grass, Styron, and Solzhenitsyn. People may get their fingernails torn out in their books or get left to die in the gulag, but there's not much moping.

I hate this stuff. With the exception of Carver, who has a certain morbid charm, I hate this stuff a

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lot. I hate it because it's boring, condescending, and monotonous, but I hate it even more because it subverts the function of good art: It's a lie. If these writers say that the United States of America, circa 1965-1987, was mean, venal, and avaricious, they might get a few points on the scoreboard. But if they say it was dull, dreary, and predictable, they're spending too much time at those writers' schools. In Iowa.

Of course, readers who love this perky bunch will say that their fiction *does* tell the truth, faithfully describing the world as Carver & Beattie & al. see it. If this is the case, all I can say is: Get help. Visit a Burger King. Take up macramé. Go to an ACLU meeting. Hit the bowling alley. Visit a West Indian bar. Join a union. Shoot some hoops at the Y. Bathe more often. You'll be pleasantly surprised to find, as Mark Twain once did, that life is rarely as grim as Emile Zola makes it out. On the other hand, if you persist in churning out your sepulchral oeuvre, don't expect any sympathy from the rest of us. To quote one of Beattie's creations:

Why haven't you figured out that you don't know the right kind of people?

Huh? □

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

Once again, bipartisan gift suggestions for the Holidays from eminent readers and writers.

WICK ALLISON

Christmas is a time to put away policy tomes and look back to the classics. Three little-known books published in this century—and thankfully republished in the last year or so—will give a rich return to any thoughtful reader. They are unusual, I admit. But hectic lives, such as I suppose *Spectator* readers live, deserve a little variety, especially when excellent writing transports the reader into unimagined worlds.

1. *The Story of San Michele* by Alex Munthe (Carroll & Graf). This 1930 bestseller (number one on the *New York Times* list for that year) is ostensibly about a Parisian physician's struggle to build his dream home on the island of Capri. It is actually about disaster, neurosis, courage, perseverance, and love. One of the most affecting autobiographies ever published, it was written at the suggestion of a friend as a cure for the author's insomnia. It is the only book he ever wrote; at the end you will wish there were twenty more.

2. *A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean (University of Chicago). A retired professor is urged by his children to set down in writing some of the stories he had so often told them about his younger years in the wilds of Montana. He begins with the title piece, which is meant to be about flyfishing but turns into something more, an unstintingly honest account of what it means to be a brother—and a son. Don't let the fact that Robert Redford is making this into a movie deter you: he may get it right.

3. *Ways of the Ant* by John Crompton (Nick Lyons Books). Nick Lyons sent this to me with a recommendation to read it, and it sat on the shelf for months before I opened it. It was 4:30 in the morning when I closed it. Crompton was not a scientist, but an adventurer. His encounters with ants in Africa captivated him; his further explorations into the sociology of antdom will captivate you.

And now two plugs: *I'll Tell You a Story, I'll Sing You a Song* by Christine Allison (Delacorte) and *The Coming Battle for the Media* by William A. Rusher (Morrow). If you have small children or grandchildren you've already discovered how much you've forgotten of the tales and songs that enlivened your own childhood; Christine vividly reminds us of how to make small eyes grow big in wonderment. Bill Rusher doesn't want those same eyes in adulthood to narrow into slits of suspicion every time they watch the evening news; his book is both an indictment and a caution of how the First Amendment is now abused and how that could in time lead to its being overthrown. One is sweet, the other stern: both care deeply about our children's futures.

Wick Allison is the president of Allison Publications, Inc. and publisher-designate of National Review. *Christine Allison is his lovely wife.*

DAVE BARRY

When it comes to holiday gift-giving, for my money you just can't beat the books available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. There's nothing quite like the look on the face of a friend or loved one on Christmas morning when he or she excitedly tears away the giftwrapping to uncover a crisp new copy of, say, the *Device Good Manufacturing Practices Manual* (400 pages, $18). "Hot Dog!" he or she is likely to exclaim. "This manual discusses requirements of the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) regulation that firms marketing medical devices must consider when they establish specifications for devices, or when they manufacture, contract manufacture, process, repack or relabel finished medical devices intended to be commercially distributed!"

Other federal titles that make "can't miss" gifts include *A Five-Year Plan for Meeting the Automatic Data Processing and Telecommunications Needs of the Federal Government* (318 pages, $15); *Swimming Pool Operation and Maintenance* (86 pages, $3.25); and *Perspectives on John Philip Sousa* (144 pages, $17). Or, for that "special some-

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one" who deserves "only the best," there's *Achievements in Radio*, which "provides an extensive history of the achievements of the National Bureau of Standards in radio science over the past 70 years." It costs $55, but at 876 pages, it's going to provide decades of reading satisfaction. I could list many more exciting titles, but I recommend that you see for yourself at one of the GPO bookstores, conveniently located in Washington, D.C., and nearly a third of the states.

Dave Barry is a nationally syndicated columnist for the Miami Herald *and the author, most recently, of the collection* Dave Barry's Greatest Hits *(Crown).*

JACQUES BARZUN

Paul Horgan: *A Certain Climate* (Wesleyan, 1988). The novelist and biographer who has made the Southwest his preferred locale is also an essayist in the great tradition. He writes in the informal as well as in the critical, biographical, and historical genres with the ease of manner of an Augustan and in this collection supplies a choice group illustrating all three kinds. His sketches of persons he has known are particularly skillful, blending as they do description, tribute, and digressions about life, love, and literature. A small book to cherish.

Sir Ernest Gowers: *The Complete Plain Words* (Godine, 1988). This reissue of a classic handbook to decent writing contains an entertaining historical retrospect by Joseph Epstein and some modernizing by other hands, not all of it called for, perhaps; but the great bulk of the book gives us the urbane British civil servant speaking quietly to his fellows and telling them how to be simple and direct. (But note his defense of the seeming redundancies of legal prose.) For the rest, follow him blindly, if that is your temperament, and with discrimination if you wish to resemble him.

Henry Fielding: *An Enquiry Into the Causes of the Late Increase in Robbers, Etc.* (Wesleyan, 1988). Most viewers of the film *Tom Jones* probably did not suspect that the author of the picturesque saga was a magistrate and a criminologist. But persons interested in the criminal law have long awaited this volume of the *Complete Works* to lay their hands on this collection of Fielding's reports to the government on current crime, accounts of cases (including Elizabeth Canning's), and defense of his ideas on handling "the great increase" in street offenses. Eighteenth-century London reminds one of other places at later times.

Christopher C. Faille: *These Last Four Centuries* (University Press of America, 1988). Subtitled "A Romp Through Intellectual History." This modest volume does an excellent job of summarizing and interpreting the ideas that have guided and beset the Western world since Descartes and Newton. The text reads like a narrative and not a textbook, and it is free from both oversimplification and smartness. Appended to the main discourse is a useful series of sketches of thinkers known and less known, followed by a good index. This readable compendium is the work not of an academic, but an amateur trained in business and the law.

Francis M. Nevins, Jr.: *Cornell Woolrich: First You Dream, Then You Die* (Mysterious Press, 1988). This exhaustive life of a strange writer comes as close to solving the psychological riddle presented by its subject as any biographer could conceivably do. The performance shows extraordinarily persistent and sagacious research, for Woolrich was secretive and friendless. He began by writing crime fiction of the sort that magazines published in the late 1920s but soon created a genre of his own, later much imitated, but never with his characteristic tone. The title of one of his later tales which became a well-known film, *The Bride Wore Black*, suggests the formula of upside down perception, but Woolrich did not work to formula. His vision was much more complex, sinister—and sad.

Jacques Barzun is a historian and critic.

ARNAUD DE BORCHGRAVE

Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities* will be required reading for centuries for anyone who wants to understand where and how we began to lose our bearings; Michael A. Ledeen's *Perilous Statecraft* is the first draft of the history of the genesis of the Reagan Doctrine—and why it failed to accomplish what it set out to do in Central America.

Arnaud de Borchgrave is the editor-in-chief of the Washington Times.

ERIC BREINDEL

Three new books, all works of nonfiction, would make good Christmas gifts for politically minded friends.

1. Students of the American left will enjoy S. Steven Powell's *Covert Cadre: Inside the Institute for Policy Studies* (Green Hill Publishers, 1987). This thoughtful examination of IPS—the hard left's most important think tank—demonstrates the extent of IPS's influence on Capitol Hill and within the Democratic party. Powell names names—and some of the names will surprise even the most suspicious.

There's a second reason to make a Christmas gift of *Covert Cadre*—David Horowitz's altogether moving introduction. Horowitz—a Red Diaper Baby and ex-New Leftist—discusses the influence of the Communist Party on his family and treats his own coming of age in the antiwar movement. His essay, and Powell's study, make for riveting reading.

2. The late Joseph P. Lash, the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Eleanor and Franklin*, barely finished *Dealers and Dreamers: A New Look at the New Deal* (Doubleday, 1988) before his recent death. It's good that he did. This is a book about the extraordinarily able, often eccentric people who ran the New Deal agencies and formed FDR's kitchen cabinet. Lash is a superb biographer. He captures the spirit of the New Deal era by focusing on individuals, particularly Thomas Corcoran ("Tommy the Cork") and Ben Cohen, both of whose private papers Lash mined to good result.

3. Also a fun read for those inclined toward biography is Carl Rollyson's *Lillian Hellman: Her Legend and Her Legacy* (St. Martin's Press, 1988). Though by no means written as exposé, Rollyson explodes the mythology Hellman created about herself.

He demonstrates that—contrary to her claims in *Scoundrel Time*—Hellman was actually a member of the Communist Party in the 1930s. Rollyson managed to locate a letter/memo Hellman sent to her attorney on the eve of her testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee in which she acknowledges her past membership in the Party.

Rollyson, in other words, has found the smoking gun. He also proves that Hellman's "Julia" was a work of fiction—again, contrary to her own claims. A thoughtful and entertaining book.

Eric Breindel is the editorial page editor of the New York Post *and a syndicated columnist.*

JAMES M. BUCHANAN

I remain bemused by our willingness to publish, review, and read fact as fiction when, at the same time, we refuse to acknowledge fact as fact. Witness Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, which I have recommended to most (not all) of my friends.

Moving to my own business, I learned from Robert Higgs, *Crisis and Leviathan* (Oxford), that Grover Cleveland should have long been among my heroes, the last President who vetoed legislation on the understood principle of *laissez faire.*

James M. Buchanan is professor of economics at George Mason University and was the Nobel Laureate in Economics in 1986.

WILLIAM S. COHEN

Inviting me to share with readers some of my favorite books is tantamount to asking me to spell the word banana—I am willing to do so but have difficulty in knowing where to stop.

The Discoverers. Daniel Boorstin has produced a prodigious, scholarly, and fascinating account of the truly awesome feats of those who had to brave oceans, burn dogmas, and reach into the realm of the unknown. He traces the paths hacked by history's explorers—from the days of sundials to those of the "indestructible" atom—at once inspiring and humbling us.

The Killer Angels. Michael Shaara provides as compelling an account of the Battle of Gettysburg as one can hope to find in fact or fiction. The battle scene's description and dialogue are so rich and real that Lee, Longstreet, and Chamberlain will remain with you for a lifetime.

The Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald chronicles the romanticism, recklessness, manners, morals, and lost dreams of a generation that seems all too modern. Each story is a gem, worthy of turning over and over to catch the facets in the light of our own experiences.

Dandelion Wine. This is Ray Bradbury's story of a twelve-year-old boy's (Douglas Spaulding) realization of the joy of being truly alive—walking barefoot in the grass, sipping lemonade on his front porch, shedding winter's concrete-heavy shoes for a new sky-touching pair of sneakers, and helping to pour summer in a glass so that during some wintry day you can "change the season in your veins by raising glass to lip tilting summer in."

A grandmother's advice has dominated the political news in recent weeks. Douglas Spaulding can't quite accept the departure of his ninety-year-old great-grandmother:

"Grandma, who'll shingle the roof next spring?"

Every April for as far back as there were calendars, you thought you heard woodpeckers tapping the housetop. But no, it was Great-grandma somehow transported, singing, pounding nails, replacing shingles, high in the sky!

"Douglas," she whispered, "don't ever let anyone do the shingles unless it's fun for them." →

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"Yes'm."

"Look around come April, and say, 'Who'd like to fix the roof?' And whichever face lights up is the face you want, Douglas. Because up there on that roof you can see the whole town going toward the country and the country going toward the edge of the earth and the river shining, and the morning lake, and birds on the trees down under you, and the best of the wind all around above. Any one of those should be enough to make a person climb a weather vane some spring sunrise. It's a powerful hour, if you give it half a chance. . . ."

Now those are words that can carry a young boy right to the White House.

Other favorites include: *Presumed Innocent* by Scott Turow, *Silence of the Lambs* by Thomas Harris, and *The Charm School* by Nelson DeMille.

William S. Cohen is a United States Senator from Maine.

KENNETH M. DUBERSTEIN

I would recommend *Modern Times*, by Paul Johnson, because it offers a good perspective not only on the events of our century, but also on the forces that shaped it; and *The Just and the Unjust*, by James Gould Cozzens, for its look at values and character, individuals and community. A book I am certainly looking forward to reading is Barry Goldwater's *Goldwater.* And I'll be rereading Roger Kahn's *The Boys of Summer*, about my beloved Brooklyn Dodgers and when we were all young!

Kenneth M. Duberstein is Chief of Staff to the President.

PAUL DUKE

My number one choice is *Battle Cry of Freedom* by James McPherson. I have read many books about the Civil War but never one written so compellingly and so comprehensively in one volume. A masterpiece! It just makes the whole period fascinating, graphically packing it in with concise and logical explanations that make you want to hurry on to the next page.

Runners-up are *Who Killed CBS?* by Peter Boyer and *Spycatcher* by Peter Wright.

Who Killed CBS? exposes the television world for what it often is—a wild and wicked business. Boyer's story is a cynical one that takes you deeply behind the scenes to view the fratricidal bloodletting that led to the decline and almost fall of CBS News. The irony is that television news, which sometimes comes across as stridently anti-business, is herein depicted as an offending business in its own right, devoid of character and scruples.

Spycatcher is the best of many spy books that I have read, a thriller extraordinaire. It reminds us once more how readily the Soviets have penetrated Western intelligence circles in their relentless pursuit of world trouble-making, if not conquest. More than anything, *Spycatcher* brings home how our allies—in this case the British—have so often let us down in the naive hope that somehow short cuts can be taken toward world peace. A remarkable, almost unbelievable, story.

Paul Duke is the moderator of PBS's "Washington Week in Review."

ANTONY FLEW

The Red Prussian by Leopold Schwartzschild, long out of print, has at last been reissued by Pickwick Books (P.O. Box 925, London W2 1FA). It may for copyright reasons be difficult to get in the USA. But all readers of *The American Spectator* must by all means acquire a copy, read it, and thereafter do everything they can to ensure that others are infiltrated into the libraries of all those colleges in which professors preach Marxist this and Marxist that, corrupting the young American mind. For Schwartzschild's biography definitively disposes of all pretense that Marx was either an honest scholar or even a tolerably decent human being. It was reading this book which led Sir Karl Popper to add a note to *The Open Society*, withdrawing the generous things he had said about Marx as a humanitarian and a lover of freedom. Sir Karl now tells me, in a letter received this very morning, that he wishes he had been equally emphatic about the scientific pretensions of Marx.

Antony Flew is professor of philosophy at the University of Reading.

PAUL FUSSELL

I've recently been reading, thinking, and writing a lot about the Second World War. Here are some books that have impressed me deeply.

E.B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa* (Presidio, 1981). A sensitive, modest, and honest Marine's account of his ghastly experience in the Pacific.

Guy Sajer, *The Forgotten Soldier* (Harper & Row, 1971). The infantryman's war in Europe seen—for a change—from the viewpoint of a young German soldier. Evidence that the suffering was not limited to the nice guys and the winners.

Samuel Hynes, *Flights of Passage* (Naval Institute Press, 1988). A memoir by a one-time USMC aviator, now an eloquent Princeton literary scholar and cultural historian. A funny, touching, and charming account of growing up in wartime America and learning to put a cheerful face on loneliness and fear.

And for some laughs, try Norman Lewis, *Naples '44* (Pantheon, 1978), a diary kept by an intelligent British soldier trying to understand a madly ungovernable populace in 1944. Blunders and thievery, sexual oddity and bizarre poverty and dignity. Thank God for the Italians.

Paul Fussell is Donald T. Regan Professor of English Literature at the University of Pennsylvania and the author, most recently, of Thank God for the Atom Bomb and Other Essays *(Summit Books).*

BOB GREENE

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl, by Anne Frank. For numerous reasons, it seems that humanity would be served well if this book were to be read again by those of us who first encountered it years ago—and, perhaps more important, to be read for the first time by new generations who have probably never heard of it.

The Right Stuff, by Tom Wolfe. For two reasons: (1) Because this is as good as nonfiction writing gets, and (2) because it offers a hint as to why Wolfe decided to try his hand at fiction. He must have known that once you hit a home run like *The Right Stuff*, there is no wisdom in trying to top yourself at the same game. Might as well move on to a totally new challenge; you know you're the best at what you've already mastered.

Elvis World, by Jane and Michael Stern. Just because. This book makes you smile and understand what all the excitement was (and is) about—and makes you realize that there are ways of portraying the truth about a celebrity without resorting to unrelenting nastiness. My favorite anecdote from the book: Peter Noone ("Herman" of the British rock group Herman's Hermits) visited Elvis during Elvis's fallow period. Apparently fishing for a compliment, Noone asked Elvis what his favorite group was. Elvis, without missing a beat, replied, "The Los Angeles police department."

Syndicated columnist Bob Greene's new book, Homecoming, *will be published in January by G. P. Putnam's Sons.*

RICHARD HARWOOD

My first entry is, of course, redundant inasmuch as all *American Spectator* subscribers will have read by now *The Aviators*, it being the eighth volume in W. E. B. Griffin's series on the adventures of Lt. Col. Craig W. Lowell and his extended family of warriors, the whole saga being published under the general title, *The Brotherhood of War.* Nothing more needs to be said.

The South, despite the infestation of Holiday Inns and Gannett newspapers, forever remains "different." Grady McWhiney, a history professor at Texas Christian University, helps us understand this apartness in a brilliant study of the Celtic South, entitled *Cracker Culture.* Try it.

Richard Harwood is ombudsman of the Washington Post.

EDWARD W. HAYES

My absolute favorite book is the sequel to *The Three Musketeers* called *Ten Years After.* It is both exciting and escapist but the Musketeers are notably wearier and more realistic. Sort of: "Sure, you have a noble Lady you want rescued—we're your men. However, let's resolve the matter of price."

Edward W. Hayes is a lawyer practicing in New York.

STUART C. IRBY, JR.

Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis. This is an old book and many people I know have appreciated Lewis's down-to-earth, practical yet intellectual approach to Christianity. I have found it helpful to read several times.

When Hell Was in Session by Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., with Ed Brandt. A personal story of survival as a POW in North Vietnam, this is a paperback book. I think it is good to reflect on the fact that Jeremiah Denton lost his seat in the Senate because he was trying to be a good senator representing the whole United States and spent very little time building a political base in Alabama.

South Africa: The Solution by Leon Louw & Frances Kendall (Amagi Publications, Ltd.). South Africa is a complex problem. This is a book that certainly does not solve the problems of South Africa but gives substantial facts about which all responsible American citizens should become aware.

Stuart C. Irby, Jr. is president of Irby Construction Company in Jackson, Mississippi.

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JOHN B. JUDIS

By the time these book recommendations appear, the choice in the 1988 presidential election will no longer appear to have been between God and Satan, but between two men separated by only a whisker of real political difference. For those who insist on maintaining the contrary, Martin J. Sklar's study of the progressive era, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism* (Cambridge, 1988), will be a useful corrective. Sklar shows that out of the pre-World War I political conflicts, leading Republicans and Democrats came to subscribe to certain fundamental assumptions about corporate power and America's overseas role. These assumptions continue to unite politicians from Ronald Reagan to Edward Kennedy and certainly Bush and Dukakis.

Former Commerce Department official Clyde Prestowitz's *Trading Places* (Basic Books, 1988) is eloquent testimony to what happens when a well-meaning public official, armed with these assumptions about the free market, free trade, and the open door, confronts the wreck of the American semiconductor industry at the hands of the sagacious and statist Japanese. Prestowitz shows the direction in which the next administration, whether Republican or Democrat, will have to turn.

In *Laboratories of Democracy* (Harvard, 1988) David Osborne shows that state governors, from Pennsylvania's Richard Thornburgh to Michigan's Jim Blanchard, were also forced by economic circumstances to turn away from the shibboleths of free market capitalism toward a more activist economic role for the state.

John B. Judis is a senior editor of In These Times *and the author of* William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives *(Simon and Schuster).*

LARRY KING

1) Absolutely read Thomas Harris's *The Silence of the Lambs*. This book will fry your eyes off. Best thriller since *Red Dragon*, which he also wrote, back in 1981 (out in paperback). I *defy* any human to put this book down.

2) *Landslide* by Jane Mayer & Doyle McManus. The definitive Iran-contra book. How anyone can read this and not be very upset is beyond me.

3) *Jolson: The Legend Comes to Life* by Herbert Goldman (Oxford Press). A wonderful biography of Al Jolson. When I put it down, I wanted to listen to Jolson records for a week.

4) *A Season Inside: One Year in College Basketball* by John Feinstein. Just published by Villard. I read it in galleys. The definitive hoops book by one of the best sports reporters. Every page is full of information I didn't know.

These are my current top four—with Harris a *must*.

Larry King's nightly TV (CNN) and radio (Mutual) shows are watched and listened to by 10 million Americans. He writes a Monday column in USA Today *and has written three books.*

MICHAEL KRAMER

The Republic—because even Dan Quayle knows he should know it.

The Economy of Cities, by Jane Jacobs. The next administration will have to do *something* about the rot in our older cities, about problems like the decline in affordable housing, the homeless, crime, and poverty. Jacobs sets the stage nicely.

Losing Ground, by Charles Murray. Agree with him or not, but Murray has influenced an entire cadre of policy makers and any stab at revisiting the problems above will have to first deal with Murray's not inconsiderable intellectual hurdles.

Michael Kramer is chief political correspondent for U.S. News & World Report.

JOHN LOFTON

The Book of Romans in the New Testament. The book which so strongly gripped St. Augustine, Luther, and shaped the Reformation, the book which shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that *all*—believers and unbelievers—are accountable to God and His law and, thus, without excuse for their disobedience.

Also, the Rev. R. J. Rushdoony's *Christianity and the State*, Otto Scott's *The Secret Six*, and Phillip Powell's *Tree of Hate* (all available from Ross House, Box 67, Vallecito, CA 95251). Dr. Rushdoony makes the case for a return to a Biblical doctrine of civil government—and details the disastrous consequences of not having such a doctrine. Mr. Scott exposes the Abolitionists (some preachers) who supported the terrorist/murderer John Brown (now you know why the *New York Times* people went bananas when they originally published this book and *then* read it). And the late Prof. Powell (history, University of California, Santa Barbara) demolishes the so-called Black Legend myth, which falsely denigrates Spain, Spaniards, and most of their works.

Last, and certainly least, *The Boz* (Doubleday, 1988), about the overgrown jerk Brian Bosworth, who played football at the University of Oklahoma and now plays for the Seattle Seahawks in the NFL. This is must reading for those who think today's publishers won't publish crap and call it a book.

John Lofton is a columnist for the Washington Times.

MICHAEL MEDVED

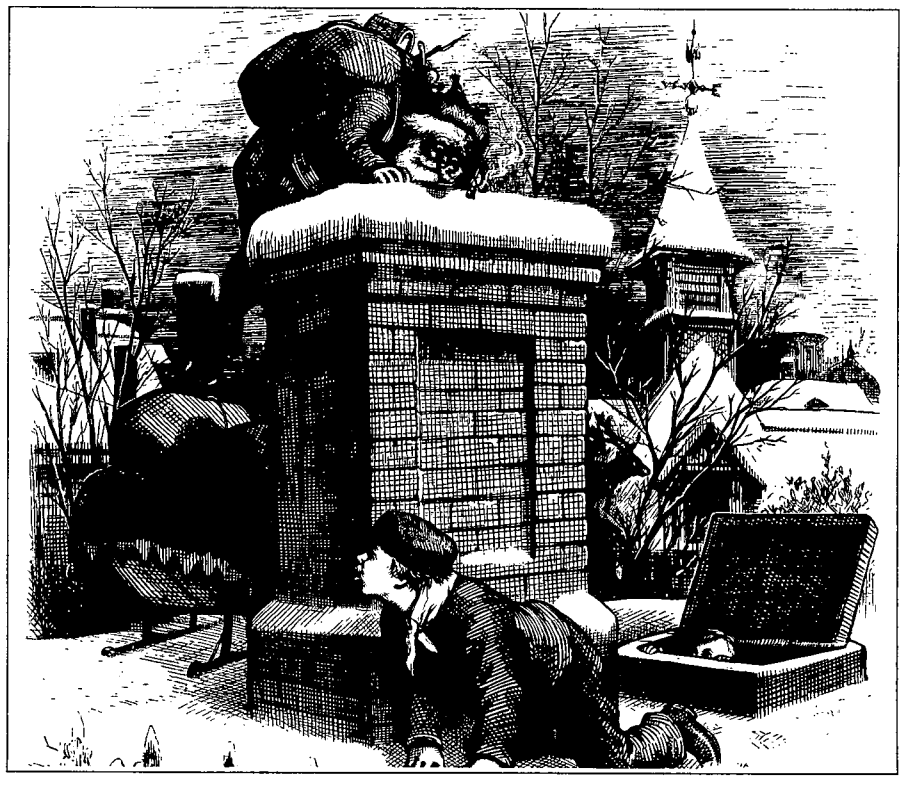
The Fords, by Peter Collier and David Horowitz (1988). A compulsively readable and consistently *illuminating* family chronicle, offering tales of genius, pettiness, self-indulgence, enlightened leadership, and eccentricity. The authors display unusual sympathy for the American business community and its values, while managing to convey a marvelous sense of the heroic efforts involved in building a great corporation.

Lovesong, by Julius Lester (1988). Though it is at times shamelessly overwritten and the prose runs through every imaginable shade of the color purple, this book presents a vivid self-portrait of a uniquely compelling public figure. Reading of the spiritual quest of poet Julius Lester, and watching his evolution from a black radical widely accused of anti-Semitism, to his current life as an observant and profoundly engaged Jew, it is impossible to remain unmoved.

Why the Jews?: The Reason for Anti-Semitism, by Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin (1983). This brief book is probably the best available treatment of one of history's most troubling questions. With crisp, powerful, and elegant arguments, the authors advance the deceptively simple notion that anti-Semitism is generated by those same essential elements of Jewish belief and behavior that have guaranteed the survival of the people of Israel over the centuries. Though written before the rise of Jesse Jackson, the insights provided here will help to explain his puzzling and seemingly self-destructive Jew-hatred.

The Bear, by William Faulkner (1942). Noble, profound, and incomparably eloquent, this great novella is worth re-reading every year. On the surface it's a thrilling hunting tale about a determined party tracking a legendary bear who has rampaged for decades through the "Big Woods" of Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi. Faulkner himself is, of course, stalking larger prey—writing of man and nature, a boy's coming of age, and the gift—and the curse—of the American earth. If you share my annoyance with so many contemporary novels—with their indulgent focus on the adulterous adventures of anguished academics and advertising men—then this red-blooded masterpiece will remind you why we once thought fiction represented a writer's highest calling. *The Bear* is most readily available as part of the collection *Go Down, Moses* or in the superb sampler, *The Portable Faulkner*, as edited by Malcolm Cowley.

Michael Medved is co-host of "Sneak Previews," the weekly movie review show on PBS. He is also the author of non-fiction books on the White House staff, the sixties, the medical profession, and the movie industry.



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RICHARD NIXON

My list for recommended reading covers a pretty wide spectrum. I would suggest the following for starters: *The Search for Historical Meaning,* by Paul Edward Gottfried; *The Morality of Law,* by Lon Fuller; *Cold Friday,* by Whittaker Chambers; *The Edge of the Sword,* by Charles de Gaulle; and a novel by William Buckley, *Mongoose.*

Richard Nixon is the thirty-seventh President of the United States.

WILLIAM REGARDIE

Monday Night Mayhem by Marc Gunter and Bill Carter (William Morrow Co.). The history of a purely American game show, rich in instant tradition with a parade of truly bigger-than-life players.

Cardinal of the Kremlin by Tom Clancy (Putnam). Clancy is the Ian Fleming of the eighties. No one spins a better tale of the biggest game of them all, the US vs. USSR.

The Predators' Ball by Connie Bruck (New American/Simon and Schuster). The story of Mike Milken, who really ran the show at Drexel Burnham. Though he never carried the title, he called the shots 'cause he was the biggest gorilla in the joint. Think of him as the man who made the modern day robber barons.

People Like Us by Dominick Dunne (Crown). An easy read about life at the top of the Big Apple social heap. Ideal for Christmas beach-reading.

The Corpse Had a Familiar Face by Edna Buchanan (Random House). The autobio of the *Miami Herald*'s ace crime reporter. Buchanan's covered more murder cases than Lou Cannon has White House news conferences.

Citizen Cohn by Nicholas von Hoffman (Doubleday). I've read both Cohn books and this one is the definitive treatment. A warm, engaging tale of a real sleazeball.

William Regardie is the editor-in-chief of Regardie's *magazine.*

RICHARD M. SCAIFE

Something old: I've always enjoyed anything by John O'Hara and, from time to time, go back and re-read him. My favorite is his first, *Appointment in Samarra,* which describes the human condition under contrasting circumstances, and gives one greater insight into the compartments in which people place themselves—often to their own disadvantage.

Something new—everyone's favorite, Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities.* We have all met the players in Wolfe's absorbing book, and no author today draws them with so fine a pen. The sad condition of New York City, and the hopelessness of its leader's institutionalized liberal thinking, are most depressing. Perhaps the one hope is that from the ashes of the bonfire there will emerge a reawakening of the need to change. I can't wait for the film.

I also enjoyed *The Fords,* by Peter Collier and David Horowitz. In many ways old Henry deserved the damage done by the Ford Foundation, but the rest of us should have been spared.

Something in-between—I still think of *The Spike,* by Robert Moss and Arnaud de Borchgrave, when I read of the activities of IPS, government officials and bureaucrats, media types, and of belated apologies from aging actresses.

Add to these selections the increasing flow of materials from *TAS,* and the growing number of centers, institutions, think-tanks, which provide islands of sanity in a "Don't Worry—Be Happy" world.

Richard M. Scaife is chairman of the Sarah Scaife Foundation.

TERRENCE M. SCANLON

For some nuts and bolts studies of why deregulation works, I suggest *The Doomsday Myth* by Charles Maurice and Charles W. Smithson. As the authors point out, the Club of Rome is nothing new: the *New York Times,* for instance, ran a story headlined "The End Of The Lumber Supply"—on Dec. 31, 1900. Another important book is *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation,* by Ronald Reagan, in which the President speaks out against abortion and its moral impact on the nation. In literature, I like Ibsen's work, especially *The Doll House.* And after a long day in the bureaucracy, Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities* is just what the doctor ordered.

Terrence M. Scanlon is chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

STEPHEN J. SOLARZ

Here are a few books I've read recently that struck me as particularly interesting and worthwhile.

1. *A Cambodian Odyssey* by Haing Ngor. A searing account of the Cambodian holocaust from the perspective of a survivor whose personal testimony about the tragic fate which befell his family and his people has earned it a prominent place in the long and tragic literature of man's inhumanity to man. At a time when Vietnam may actually be planning to withdraw from Cambodia, thereby creating new possibilities for the return of the Khmer Rouge, this book is a timely reminder of the need to prevent Pol Pot and his murderous minions from ever regaining power in Phnom Penh.

2. *Finest Hour (1939-1941)* and *Road to Victory (1941-1945)* by Martin Gilbert. In Martin Gilbert's monumental eight-volume biography of Winston Churchill, these two books about the Prime Minister during the Second World War are probably the most magnificent and memorable of them all. Written on the canvas of the triumphs and tragedies of a global conflict between the forces of good and evil, it definitively demonstrates how the wisdom, eloquence, and resolute determination of one man made a critical difference in the salvation of Western civilization.

3. *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. The film was good but the book is even better. A powerful and poignant portrayal of black poverty and suffering, it is also a deeply moving tribute to the triumph of the human spirit in the face of economic and emotional adversity. Above all, it provides a glimpse into the realities of life for poor, black women in the rural South and how, in spite of almost unbearable oppression, they have maintained their dignity and humanity.

4. *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* by John Maynard Keynes. This may be one of the few books ever written on economics which reads like a fast-paced novel. A lucid and luminous analysis of the economic consequences of the Versailles Conference, which brought an end to World War I but sowed the seeds which led to World War II, it has a distinct and disturbing relevancy for the contemporary debt crisis in the Third World. Just as the imposition of reparations far beyond Germany's ability to pay contributed to the rise of fascism in the Weimar Republic, so are current debt obligations, which many Third World countries are unable at current rates of interest to meet, likely to contribute to the demise of democracy in Latin America and elsewhere around the world.

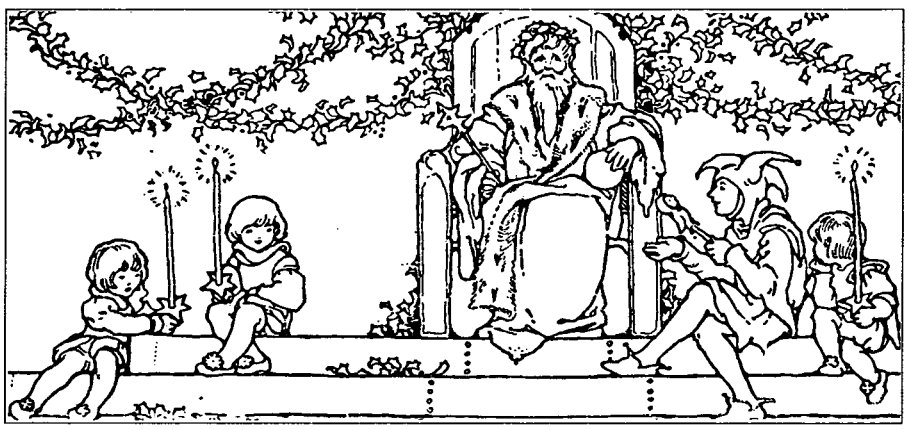
Stephen J. Solarz is a Democratic congressman from Brooklyn, New York.

R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

With the dismal lines of the presidential candidates last TV debate bong-bonging in my head, I file this list of recommended books for Christmas and am reminded again that we read not only for information and entertainment but also to improve our facility with the Queen's English—or should we now be saying the Prime Minister's?

Ah well, begin with *Hardball: How Politics is Played—Told by One Who Knows the Game,* that being Tip O'Neill's former aide, Christopher Matthews. Frequently one is asked who is the bright new liberal commentator to be weighed against the platoon of bright conservatives who have been thrown into battle this past decade. Matthews is the man, not Michael Kinsley, who is essentially an accountant with a talent for sly bookkeeping, or Richard Cohen, who belongs on the Style page. Matthews writes well, knows politics intimately, and is a straightforward liberal, not a trickster juggling reality.

Add to this *Conversion: A Spiritual Journey* by the sinner come home to God but always as a literary man, Malcolm Muggeridge. Then there is John B. Judis's biography of Bill Buckley, *William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives.* Mr. Judis struggles honorably as a man of the left to do a great man of the right justice and tells a story all political aficionados should be familiar with. P. J. O'Rourke, in his wholesome collection of travel diaries to some of the world's hellholes, *Holidays in Hell,* proves why he would have been an excellent choice to head the Peace Corps. And finally do not overlook Kenneth Lynn's superb biography of Papa: *Hemingway.* Lynn takes a familiar life and gives it fresh interest, demonstrating the high quality of Papa's art, the strengths and weaknesses of his embattled character, and his every tic. After reading it we ap-



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preciate anew Papa's skills. What is more, Lynn so brings him to life that if Hemingway walked into your living room and had a drink you would know exactly what to expect. Your entire wine cellar would be in peril. Merry Christmas!

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. is the Editor-in-Chief of The American Spectator.

COLIN WALTERS

Fiction lovers willing to be teased and entertained in experimental mode might try *Wittgenstein's Mistress* by David Markson (Dalkey Archive, $20.00, 240 pages). A modern Helen gamely struggles with being the last person on earth. Left absolutely alone in her thinking day to day, she is thrown back upon Wittgenstein's dictum that the real problem is not philosophical matter itself but our "knotted understanding" of things. A contrapuntally structured, good-tempered, and artfully satisfying work.

A memorable celebration of love under pressure, *Letters to Olga, June 1979 to September 1982*, by Vaclav Havel, translated from the Czech and with an introduction by Paul Wilson (Knopf, $25.00, 397 pages). While the playwright was a political prisoner doing hard labor, his only contact with the outside world was a weekly letter to his wife—and that censored by a brutally censorious prison warden.

A food book beyond compare: the new *Larousse Gastronomique* edited by Jenifer Harvey Lang (Crown, $50.00, 1193 pages). The earlier American edition was handicapped by its baffling combination of English text with a French-language index. This one presents no such difficulty. There are many, many splendid pictures (most of them in color), photos, maps, and diagrams on which to feast the eye when not reading the encyclopedic new text by Robert J. Courtine, food editor of *Le Monde*.

Charming canine whimsy: *The Dog in Art From Rococo to Post-Modernism* by Robert Rosenblum (Harry Abrams, $27.50, 120 pages). A mock-serious study, beautifully illustrated and told tongue-in-cheek by a professor of fine arts at New York University. "The existential loneliness of Giacometti's Parisian dog has a major rival across the English channel in the series of dog paintings also executed in the early 1950s by Francis Bacon." That sort of delightful nonsense.

For the insatiable appetite, *The Letters of Henry Adams, Vols. IV, V, and VI: 1892-1918* edited by J. C. Levenson et al. (Harvard University Press, $150.00 for the three-volume set)—2,350 pages in all. Amble back to the days when one Washington gentleman might address another (Adams's friend John Hay in this 1893 instance) "Dear Heart."

Colin Walters is book editor of the Washington Times.

PAUL H. WEAVER

Some of the best books I've read lately fall in a category I think of as wonderful-but-outrageous-yet-still-awfully-good.

William Greider's *Secrets of the Temple*, a political portrait of the Federal Reserve Board, is one of the most spectacular books ever written about American politics and economics. Anyone who's interested in how this country works, or who likes to curl up with a serious-minded page-turner, should block out a month to read this epic. Watch it, though: this guy thinks inflation is a good thing (he imagines it expropriates the rich when all it really does is bail out government for a while), and in all those pages he can't explain how a supposedly deflationary Fed gave us the inflation of the 1970s.

The recent books about the sixties are like their subject: self-indulgent, incomplete, captivating. The ones I like best: Todd Gitlin's intelligent *Years of Hope, Days of Rage* and Albert Goldman's relentless, iconoclastic *Lives of John Lennon*. The sixties having been an era of self-serving self-betrayal, it's fitting (if still dismaying) that these books put down their subject in order, as it seems to me, to glorify their participant-authors.

A lot of books about vast, troubled, shrinking General Motors are being assembled in a lot of word processors just now, but I'll be surprised if any surpasses Albert R. Lee's unheralded *Call Me Roger*, a fascinating, intelligent, fair-minded, but devastating portrait of GM chairman Roger Smith by a former GM speechwriter.

Lately I've been plowing through books on media, and for my money, Daniel Boorstin's funny, polemical *The Image*, published a generation ago, is still the best, written in an age when, for reasons I don't completely understand but am grateful for, people were interested in something more than whose side the press is on and so criticized journalism without being boring, spiteful, or self-serving about it.

Paul H. Weaver, John M. Olin Fellow at the Hoover Institution, is the author of The Suicidal Corporation *(Simon and Schuster/Cato).*

GEORGE F. WILL

Picasso: Creator and Destroyer, by Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington, brings convincing learning and proper energy to the task of reducing Picasso to his appropriate size. Ms. Huffington does the considerable service of relating Picasso to the cultural and political forces and values that make him more interesting than is sometimes thought and more admirable than is frequently understood.

Solitude: A Return to the Self, by Anthony Storr, is an inspiriting defense of the spiritual benefits of being alone, drawing upon the experience of people whose creativity was nourished by the best company they ever kept, themselves. This book has sold reasonably well across the country but has been a bestseller in Washington, a city of coalitions and committee meetings.

George F. Will is a nationally syndicated columnist.

CHILTON WILLIAMSON, JR.

Flannery O'Connor: Collected Works, selected and annotated by Sally Fitzgerald (The Library of America, $30). Flannery O'Connor's novels and stories have become increasingly popular over the past decade or so; now, with her inclusion in the Library of America series (the only other contemporary author represented there is William Faulkner) she comes into her own. A great literary artist, she managed to convey through her lucid prose poetry the spiritual poverty and perversity of the modern world without moving outside the geographical compass of middle Georgia to do it; almost literally, she shows us "fear in a handful of dust." By avoiding the experimentalist trap while adapting classical exposition to her own highly original ends, Miss O'Connor offers in her work a way around the post-modernist literary bog that has deadheaded literary fiction at the present time.

The 'Little House' Boxed Set: Little House in the Big Woods, Little House on the Prairie, Farmer Boy, On the Banks of Plum Creek, By the Shores of Silver Lake, The Long Winter, Little Town on the Prairie, These Happy Golden Years, The First Four Years, by Laura Ingalls Wilder (Harper & Row, paperbound, $30; each volume available hardbound, $13.95). You couldn't tell from the television show, but Mrs. Wilder was one of the finest writers in the history of American literature: humane, poetic, unsentimental, unflinching in her grasp of reality, and with a prose style as spare and imagistic as Hemingway's—as well as a thousand percent more honest. Her books are "children's books" only in the sense that children can read, enjoy and admire them; the literary skill by which the narrative consciousness of the volumes expands and sophisticates itself as the child Laura grows into adulthood can only be appreciated by adults—and sophisticated ones at that. Mrs. Wilder's account of a frontier girlhood spent in the wilds of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, and the Dakota Territory in the 1860s, seventies, and eighties is a literary masterpiece, as well as an invaluable historical document.

Travels in Arabia Deserta, by Charles M. Doughty (Dover Press, 2 vols. paper; $14.95 each). Exactly one hundred years ago this remarkable work, one of the great bergs of English literature, was published by Cambridge University Press—and disappeared almost at once except from the shelves of Arabists and connoisseurs of the language until its reissue by Cambridge in 1921, with an introduction by T. E. Lawrence who had found inspiration both as adventurer and writer in it. The measure of Doughty's greatness is that this book, written by a gentle and devout English Christian who traveled down with the Haj from Damascus to Medain Salih for the purpose of inspecting mysterious inscriptions supposed to have Biblical import and spent two years living among the Bedouin tribes, has far greater drama than *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, whose author was a soldier, not a scholar, and who actively courted danger and adventure. Doughty, who believed that the English language had declined precipitously from the days of Spenser and the Tyndale Bible, uses both archaic words and words archaically; his syntax has prompted critics to remark that he wrote the language as if he found it lying around. In truth, no one, before or since, has written like Doughty. And yet, he got Arabia and its people on paper, as also no one else, before or since—while enduring physical hardship and, as an "infidel," the constant threat of violent death. His courage, physical as well as mental, and his almost Christlike dignity in moments of crisis, imparts an urgency to his book that any number of Lawrence's camel charges and train up-blowings fail to generate.

Chilton Williamson, Jr. is a senior editor at National Review *and the author of several books, the most recent of which is* Desert Light, *a novel.* □

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David Brock

SELLING GLOBALONEY IN THE SCHOOLS

Now that their issue is dead, the nuclear-freezers have turned their attention to Central America—and to propagandizing American schools. And with the help of Minnesota's department of education, they're starting to make progress.

Ten-year-old school children in New York City are studying their candy bars. "What would happen," their teacher asks, "if there were a dock strike in Africa or big forest fires in Canada?" The answer: The manufacturers might not have enough chocolate to make the bar or enough paper for the wrapper. Thus the students see there is a world in their candy bars. Such exercises are by no means unique to the nation's cosmopolitan centers. In Prairie View, Illinois, students in a mathematics class learn about currency by examining not only American dollars but also Japanese yen and Mexican pesos.

The concept of international education is at least a decade old, having grown from the findings of a U.S. presidential commission in 1979 that found American students sorely lacking in foreign language skills and the ability to understand cultures other than their own. Throughout the current decade, the movement gathered steam as both federal and state education officials—citing such statistics as the fact that 40 percent of high school students cannot locate Japan on a world map—touted reforms to require more study of foreign languages, world history, and geography in the schools.

A practical impetus for such education was emphasized by a group of Southern governors in a 1986 report that called American students "internationally illiterate" and endorsed international studies as a way to bolster U.S. efforts to compete in the world economy. Most appeals like the governor's report proceeded from an essentially conservative premise, urging the reinstatement of curriculum requirements scotched in the 1960s movement for "educational democracy" that gave students more control over what they studied. This 1980s reform movement can be said to have been at least moderately successful: the U.S. Department of Education says that more than thirty states have mandated tougher foreign language requirements and fifteen have increased world history and geography courses in the last five years.

At the same time, a parallel and sometimes overlapping movement in education circles—often with radically different objectives—has also been gaining strength, under the rubric of "global education." The term does not refer to a course or courses, but rather to a new way of teaching existing courses. Last summer, a study by the Commission on Global Education, underwritten by the Rockefeller Foundation, said that standard courses in schools, from history to geography to biology to physics, should be "infused with a global perspective." The Commission, chaired by former University of California president Clark Kerr, found that 1,300 schools already have a formal "global" component to their curriculums.

A report last year by the National Governors' Association found that almost every state has recommended to local school districts some type of global education. For example, New York's Department of Education has urged principals to "integrate a global perspective" into their curriculums. California has initiated a statewide global education project, including funds for new curriculum materials and teacher training. According to the National Council on Foreign Language and International Relations, there are thirty-five so-called "magnet" high schools across the country that specialize in global education.

The potential problem with all this was summed up simply by former Education Secretary William Bennett, in a response to the Kerr Commission report: "When I hear 'geography' and 'history,' I'm pleased. When I hear 'global perspectives,' I'm usually a little nervous."

A review of the governors' report shows that global education is indeed an elastic term: in addition to such offerings as world history and foreign languages, other global curriculums included current events classes, sister-school projects with foreign countries, international business courses, nuclear-war education or "peace" studies, and state-sponsored "international events." What all the courses have in common is that they "show the diversity of cultural patterns" in a world that is "a series of interrelated systems," the report said. A world history class would become "global," for example, by studying Africa in as much detail as Europe. A Spanish language class would include study of politics and culture in Spanish-speaking countries. In many globalized curriculums, Dick and Jane books become Juan and Maria books; world history becomes "galactic" history; and the Pledge of Allegiance is translated into a different language each day.

The educational establishment—groups like the National Education Association, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, and the Parent-Teacher Association—has warmly embraced the concept of global education. But it has been pushed most strongly by private groups that generate global curriculum materials and market them to school districts and individual teachers.

One of these is Educators for Social Responsibility, a Cambridge-based group with 15,000 members nationwide and a $500,000 annual budget. "The global perspective brought into physics would be a discussion of nuclear war. In chemistry, it would be toxic waste," explains ESR's Shelley Berman. ESR has already succeeded in convincing such states as Oregon and cities like New York, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and Los Angeles to require that nuclear war be discussed as part of the public school curriculum; in a survey by New York University's Herbert London of every major school district in the country, all respondents claimed to have formal or informal courses on nuclear- weapons issues. ESR currently has contracts with school districts in New York, Boston, and Portland to develop "conflict resolution" curriculums. "Rather than debate, we aim to resolve global issues through dialogue and resolution," Berman says.

In some schools, no doubt, global education is the province of serious local educators out to combat ignorance and parochialism. But most of the professional global educators seem to have an expressly political purpose. ESR, for example, was founded in cooperation with its namesake, Physicians for Social Responsibility, which

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played a leading role in the nuclear freeze campaign of the early 1980s. ESR has distributed curriculum materials urging students to "break the law" to "ban the bomb." ESR's intent was to move the freeze campaign into America's classrooms, according to writer André Ryerson. In an essay in *Commentary* (June 1986) Ryerson dissected curricular guides and described efforts by the NEA, ESR, and the Union of Concerned Scientists to make their concept of peace education mandatory. Discussion of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, for example, focuses on death and destruction without supplying any political or military context. And the peace curriculums usually fail to present a balanced view of the Soviet Union, teaching students that, as Ryerson wrote, "our difficulty with the Soviets is essentially a problem in our heads."

The literature of another group pushing global education, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon, is even more explicit in its activist mission. The group says "serious global educators" are "change agents . . . that influence development of attitudes." The laboratory's materials for teachers discuss the "political socialization of young people" and suggest that "visibility lends credibility to a position regardless of what it is." Since global education is a "world view," a "highly nationalistic" person would not make a good global educator, the materials warn.

This activism has upset some educators' groups, including the National Council for the Social Studies, which convened a panel in 1987 to examine global education. It cited this statement in the Michigan department of education's Guidelines for Global Education: "Global Education leads to the implementation and application of the global perspective in striving for just and peaceful solutions to world problems." The panel said of the statement:

> . . . it may be taken to suggest that global education promotes taking up a certain point of view for judging international conflicts—namely, the "global" point of view. If this . . . interpretation means that, whenever there is a conflict between the United States and one or more other countries, a U.S. citizen should always support the resolution that is best for the world as a whole, it is obvious how global education, on this interpretation, would be controversial. It would teach a lesson that, on its face anyway, seems at odds with the special loyalties and commitments that characterize communities. Better understanding of the world is one thing. Refusing to give special weight to your own country's welfare or to your own countrymen is quite another.

The American Federation of Teachers, in a July 1987 report entitled "What Must Be Taught," called for teaching world history with an emphasis on Western civilization. The report criticized the global education approach for detracting from American students' "ability to understand the role and meaning of democracy in world history."

The AFT document served as the basis for the founding of a new group called the Alliance for Education in Global and International Studies (AEGIS), a consortium of education organizations, both national and local, concerned about the political tilt of the global curriculum. Among the group's professed goals is: "to strengthen our society's ability to pass on to our young an understanding of those traditions and values of our heritage which undergird our democracy and the principles and commitments that sustain it."

One of the prime movers behind AEGIS is Dr. Robert Pickus, president of the World Without War Council and an early backer of global education. "Initially [global education] was supposed to emphasize foreign language and world history and ethics," Pickus says. "But it ends up being a threat to education, not education. A class on military history turns out to be an all-out attack on the American military without a mention of the Soviet Union. Current events classes are used to support Marxism-Leninism in the Third World. The courses designed to combat ethno-centrism leave students acentric, having no morals or values at all."

Similar concerns were raised in Colorado by an analyst for the U.S. Department of Education, Gregg Cunningham, who examined the activities of the Center for Teaching International Relations (CTIR) at the University of Denver, which conducts teacher workshops, provides consulting services to public schools, and publishes global education materials. His scorching 1986 report found that CTIR "boldly proclaims its quest for a 'new world order' and dismisses those who resist the creation of this new age millennium as 'miseducators.' " The report highlighted the relativistic or value-neutral stance of the global curriculum, where political systems and cultural practices are not more or less virtuous, only different. CTIR's Teacher Resource Guide suggests teachers ask students: "Do we sometimes have a tendency to define our values and behaviors as 'right' or 'correct' and determine that others' values and behaviors are 'wrong' or 'weird'? Is any one person or culture 'right' or 'wrong'?"

On questions of international relations, the Cunningham report found the CTIR materials "profoundly dovish." In one exercise, students are instructed to see "the United States and the Soviet Union as rival street gangs." Later, it is suggested that students "don't need to understand the global political situation or the details of the arms race. . . ." They should just "give up blaming" and "find a Russian and get to know her or him." One exercise on nuclear conflict proposes students act out the following: "To fully impress the President of the United States with the magnitude of his intended action, he is not to be permitted to resort to nuclear defense until he has killed one of his own aides with a butcher knife, so as to remove the missile firing codes from a capsule previously implanted in the aide's chest cavity."

As to CTIR's influence, the Cunningham report noted that some 500 teachers per year have completed CTIR programs over the past decade and that 6,000 copies of CTIR's curriculum had been sold. "CTIR has worked its programs into the course offerings of many school districts in the Western states," the report concluded.

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Up to now, most global curriculums have concerned U.S.-Soviet relations, especially nuclear-weapons issues; critiques of the curriculums have focused on how these issues are treated as well. But with the Reagan Administration's embrace of détente with the Soviets, it was only natural that the political agenda of global education would begin to shift, taking up more contentious issues like Central America. Let's examine, in some detail, how this issue is approached in Minnesota's schools, where one of the nation's most comprehensive global education efforts is underway.

The Minnesota department of education, spurred on by a state-funded project called "Minnesota in the World and the World in Minnesota," declared in 1986 that between 1990 and the year 2000—the "Global Education Decade"—all of the public elementary and secondary schools in Minnesota should introduce a "global perspective" to the disciplines they teach. The move was endorsed by the state board of education and by Gov. Rudy Perpich, who called it a "chance to explore the world."

Minnesota's global education apparatus is run through two state-funded organizations: the state department of education and the University of Minnesota College of Education's Global Education Center. A November 1987 memo from the state department of education stated that an "international or global perspective means viewing the world and its people with understanding and concern. Understanding requires knowledge of, and respect for, differences and similarities of the world's people, the process of development, and how goods, services, and ideas are exchanged. Concern necessitates assuming responsibility for the needs of all people and commitment to finding just and peaceful resolution to global issues. . . . It includes the study of nations, cultures and how they change, and on the individual's responsibility in this change process." Not exactly an eloquent mandate, but harmless enough.

Implementation of a global curriculum is left to individual school districts. "The state's role," says Roger Wangan, the director of international studies for the state department of education and Minnesota's global education guru, "is to help interpret what global education means." In anticipation of the global education decade, many Minnesota school districts have begun experimenting with the concept "in the last half dozen years," says Wangan. Many have also instituted the global approach in fulfilling a statewide high school requirement that all students take one year of "Contemporary World Studies" to graduate. "We've been focusing on current events, first the nuclear issue, then South Africa, now Central America. We haven't gotten to the Israeli-Palestinian issue yet," says Wangan. Though Wangan says the state strives for "balance" in such controversial matters, an examination of how the schools deal with Central America shows that Minnesota has fallen far short of that professed goal.

On Central American issues, Minnesota's educators have come to rely almost exclusively on a local left-wing organization called the Central America Resource Center (CARC). The activities of CARC in Minnesota show how vulnerable the education world is to committed political cadres accomplishing their task through emotional manipulation, indoctrination, and exploitation of school children.

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The state's reliance on CARC not only debases educational standards, but also teaches students to accept the crudest falsifications of international issues at face value.

CARC claims a membership of 1,000 and an annual budget of $100,000. Its educational outreach director, Mary Swenson, says that through the group's speaker's bureau, its curriculum directory, lending library, and teacher training—all promoted and in part even paid for by the state of Minnesota—CARC reached over 10,000 students in the last school year. In recommending CARC to teachers, Minnesota's global educators never identify CARC as anything but an apolitical clearinghouse for information about Central America.

What is this organization that has come to play such an important role in Minnesota's attempts to encourage global education? According to its promotional materials, CARC was founded in 1983 by "Minnesotans concerned about the war-like posturing of the U.S. government in Central America" to serve as a "communications center for anti-war activists concerned about abuses of U.S. offensive military operations and U.S.-financed wars in the Third World." CARC is an umbrella group for the local chapters of five national networks: the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES); the Nicaragua Solidarity Committee; the Guatemala Solidarity Committee; Pledge of Resistance; and Indian Concern for Central America. In 1985, the official spokesman in the upper Midwest for El Salvador's Marxist FMLN guerrillas, Guillermo De Paz, served as CARC's treasurer.

CARC officials also work closely with Minnesota's Socialist Worker's Party. CARC sponsors lectures by prominent SWP activists; co-sponsors events with the SWP's Pathfinder's Bookstore; and promotes SWP events in its monthly calendar. CARC board members regularly speak at SWP "militant forums." In March, for example, CARC's founding director, Anne Winkler, spoke at the SWP on "Cuba's Revolution Within a Revolution." A poster promoting the event pictured Uncle Sam about to be cut off at the knees by a machete-wielding Fidel Castro. Gary Prevost of CARC's Nicaragua Solidarity Committee is a member of the SWP and served as the party's 1982 state campaign treasurer. Bill Onasch, a member of CARC's speakers' bureau, is also an SWP member.

In January 1986 CARC produced a directory of Central America "classroom resources" for grades K-12 in response to "teachers' repeatedly expressed needs for up-to-date, substantive resources for teaching about Central America." The 135-page book is advertised as "all you need to read to know about what's going on in Central America" and recommends books, articles, and audio-visual materials to help teachers present current information about the region.

Among the recommended documents are: "Back in Control: The CIA's Secret Propaganda Campaign Puts the Agency Exactly Where it Wants to Be," published by Common Cause; "Endgame: A Special Report on the [U.S.] Military Strategy in Central America," published by the North American Coalition on Latin America, as well as that organization's "The Real War," which "exposes U.S. war against the progressive movements in El Salvador and Guatemala"; "Guide to U.S. Military Aid and Strategy in Central America," a "listing of U.S. corporations supplying arms to Central America" published by National Action/Research on the Military Industrial Complex; the "High School Organizing Packet," published by the War Resisters League; "Revolution and Intervention in Central America," "contemporary Marxism" published by Synthesis Publications; "Send in the Marines: A Chronology of U.S. Military Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean," published by Latinamerica Press; "Watch Out for the Trojan Horse," a CARC publication revealing that "most [U.S.] economic assistance grants are false gifts"; "Behind the Line in El Salvador," a report from Oxfam America by Dr. Charles Clements, who "spent a year providing medical services in the opposition-controlled area of El Salvador"; and "El Salvador: Platform and Proposal for the Formation of a Provisional Government of Broad Participation," a document produced by the Marxist FMLN guerrillas of that country.

Of the 132 entries, the only material listed in the directory that does not follow the pro-Sandinista, Marxist-Leninist revolutionary line is something called "Special Reports, Gist, Current Policy and Horizons," a U.S. State Department document described as "giving the current administration line." But this document, Wangan says, "is not usable. The reading level is too high and it was all political. It didn't have the facts."

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The CARC directory carries endorsements from the National Network of Teachers' Committees on Central America (which has distributed it to schools nationwide) as well as a national group called Educators in Support of ANDES, a Salvadoran labor front group for the FMLN. But more importantly, the directory has gained the imprimatur of the state department of education as Minnesota's only resource guide on the subject of Central America. It is also the only such directory available through the state's Global Studies Resource Center, Minnesota's repository for "the most up-to-date collection of global curriculum materials available nationally." When teachers request information on developing a Central America curriculum, the department mails them a copy of the $10 CARC directory at state expense. More than 100 of the directories have already been distributed by the state, according to CARC's Anne Winkler, and CARC has sold another 1,000 copies to school districts across the country.

By way of explanation, Wangan says: "I know there is not a one-to-one ratio of left and right in there. The CARC directory is the only resource that existed at the time. It was a hit or miss proposition."

In addition to Wangan's office at Minnesota's department of education, teachers look to another organization for guidance on curriculum matters and in-service training: the University of Minnesota College of Education's Global Education Center. The center, run by Prof. John Cogan, exercises its influence mainly through the publication of a quarterly newsletter which goes out to every school principal in the state.

Last winter's issue focused on Central America. The newsletter unabashedly endorsed the work of CARC, which was described as possessing "a wealth of materials for teachers K-12." It specifically recommended the CARC directory, as well as other "resources" including the North American Coalition on Latin America, a pro-Castro group; Vets for Life, composed of "vets opposed to the Reagan administration's policies toward Central America" who "share their Vietnam experiences through prose and poetry and relate it to the current Central American situation"; and the Traveler's Society, a local group founded by Mary Shepard, a CARC board member and a founder of Women Against Military Madness (WAMM). According to the group's literature, it organizes tours which "take participants to societies in the midst of dramatic change," and "helps them develop fresh approaches to . . . regional conflicts and personal biases." At the request of the state department of education, the Traveler's Society organized and conducted a January 1987 Minnesota teachers' tour of Central America which focused on curriculum development for the public schools.

The global center newsletter also endorses what is known as "glocal" education, "thinking globally and acting locally." In this view, merely studying Central America is not enough. "Issues are more than facts," the newsletter said. "Students who understand that the lives of millions in Central America and in the U.S. are impacted by foreign policy decisions will hopefully want to influence these decisions and will care enough to insist that the government be accountable to the people."

The main section of the state's newsletter recommends three specific Central American curriculum units, two of which are described as "widely used high school curricula that foster critical thinking skills." One of these is called "Identifying Unstated Assumptions: El Salvador," written by a Minnesota elementary school Spanish teacher. It describes a young man and an older woman in dialogue. "Gee!" the man says. "I just read that human rights in El Salvador are so bad that we might have to stop giving aid to that government. Hmm . . . but then we have to stop the Communist threat. I guess human rights will have to wait." Then the woman responds, "Wait a minute! You are assuming: that the U.S. aid to El Salvador is used to improve people's lives; that the rebels are all Communists; that human rights are not always worth supporting; that the war in El Salvador is an East/West conflict." The unit also includes background information from a Salvadoran "union federation" called FENASTRAS, another FMLN front group. This document goes on to condemn Minnesota corporations like Pillsbury, Cargill, and 3M by name, denouncing them for making "huge profits off the labor of workers in El Salvador."

The second curriculum unit recommended by the College of Education's newsletter is called "Indian Family Life," which is based, according to the preface, on CARC information. In the section on El Salvador, students read

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a play which depicts the trial of four American nuns charged with helping incite a "revolution of love" in the country. At the end of the trial, the curriculum instructions say, "The judge can either condemn the four women to death or say something like, 'This is a serious case. We need more discussion. Is there anyone in the audience who wishes to speak either for or against these women?'" So students have two choices: favoring revolution and opposing the nuns' execution or questioning revolution and coming down on the side of killing the nuns. A democratic outcome is never even considered.

"Amigos" is the title of a recommended curriculum unit aimed at elementary school students. It is the work of the Minnesota/Leon Project, which runs a sister-city program between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Leon, Nicaragua. Nancy Trechsel, one of the project directors, says she has sent dozens of students to Nicaragua in exchange programs where they "work on chlorination systems for the city of Leon." The link to global education, she says, is that "everyone in the world needs clean water." Of her political views of the Nicaraguan situation, Trechsel says, "We [the project] are on the side of the people. We accept the government in Nicaragua as the legitimate elected government."

The state's global education newsletter says the "Amigos" unit will "help children understand their roles as global citizens by introducing issues of poverty and human rights." "Amigos" consists largely of a "Nicaragua role play" in which students recite the dialogue of various characters. Some examples: "My name is Antonette. I am 20 years old. Shortly before the triumph, I worked with 100,000 other volunteers on the literacy crusade. We went to all parts of our country—even to the mountains and Atlantic Coast—to teach people how to read. After finishing our own training classes, we taught adults and children alike to read. Before the revolution over half the people couldn't read. Now the number's down to about 10 percent. I am very proud of that." "Jorge" says: "I am 50 years old. Before the revolution I owned many large coffee plantations and made a great profit. I paid my workers only about a dollar a day. Now I must pay them a minimum wage and I don't make so much money." And finally: "I am a priest, Father Rodriguez. Before the triumph the people did whatever I told them without question. They were like sheep. Now they want to read the Bible themselves! And they want the church to help them work for better living conditions!" "Amigos" also implores students to take "action," suggesting "protesting U.S. military intervention" in Central America. Trechsel says "Amigos" is in use at about eight local schools; she presented it herself twice at Jefferson High School in Bloomington, Minnesota (a Minneapolis suburb).

The global center newsletter recommends that teachers consult CARC's speakers' bureau when teaching courses on Central America. A look at the membership of the bureau reveals the same sort of bias exhibited in the CARC directory. Among them are: the above-mentioned Gary Prevost, of the Nicaragua Solidarity Committee, who "has traveled to Central America, Cuba and Grenada"; Brock Robinson, who "has video tape on health care in the new Nicaragua"; Judy Rohde, who was a "member of National Education Association's delegation to Cuba as guests of the Cuba Teachers Union"; and Mary Spiering, who "emphasizes alternatives to U.S. patriarchal model for U.S. foreign policy."

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The global center newsletter reminds teachers of their "important" responsibility to expose students to the "alternative press" and suggests CARC's library as a good source. According to a list of CARC periodicals, they stock exclusively far-left publications, including *Barricada*, the official newspaper of the Sandinista junta. CARC rents, loans, or sells these and other materials to teachers and students. According to CARC's November 1987 newsletter, its library has "become a popular place for many high school students and their teachers." For example, the library sponsored a workshop for high school debaters during the 1987-88 school year, when Central America was the national high school debate topic. Browsing through CARC's library one will find publications like "Real War Stories," a comic book published by the Central America Committee for Conscientious Objectors. In one of the six stories in the book, an American sailor decides to become a conscientious objector after encountering "a young sailor lying on the floor, sobbing. He'd been violated, 'greased,' they call it. It's common on Navy vessels. Some guys grab one of the smaller recruits, shove a 'grease gun' up his rectum and go. . . . The small man, the guy who can't or won't fit in, falls prey to the larger man . . ."

Cogan, the university center director, explains CARC's influence this way: "CARC has a very strong left-ist bias. But global education is underfunded. If there are few resources available, do you ignore the area altogether or give students access to what is there?" It seems almost too obvious to point out that a host of organizations other than CARC produce free materials on the Central American conflict, including the AFL-CIO, Freedom House, the Puebla Institute, and Prodemca. Pickus's World Without War Council publishes a mainstream directory of Central America resources for teachers that is available at no charge.

Minnesota regularly sponsors global education teachers' conferences. One, in April 1987, was a Central America forum co-sponsored by CARC and attended by about seventy-five teachers. After parents raised a fuss about the imbalance of the conference, CARC was not allowed as a sponsor of a semi-annual Minnesota Council for Social Studies conference in March 1988 that attracted several hundred. Nonetheless, CARC's education outreach director, Mary Swenson, coordinated two of the five sections on Central America, one a slide show, the other a presentation of its "Indian Family Life" curriculum. The other sections were run by Joel Mugge of the Center for Global Education at Augsburg College, who spoke against U.S. intervention in the region; representatives of "Vets for Life"; and Elsa Statzner, author of another CARC curriculum.

In addition to relying heavily on CARC, the state of Minnesota also develops some of its own curriculum material suggested for use in the schools. The state department of education produced, for example, a twenty-page Central America study guide for junior high and high school students under the direction of Roger Wangan's office. Written by Faith Adams, a member of the CARC speakers' bureau, the guide says of the conflict in El Salvador:

> The FMLN promises to give land to the people who work the soil, to provide education and medical care for everyone, to guarantee decent wages for a day's work and to ensure basic human rights. Some members of the guerrilla movement have been tortured and killed for trying to overthrow the government. The FMLN believes that the only way to bring change to El Salvador is to fight for it. . . . The U.S. and Salvadoran governments believe that the FMLN will make El Salvador "Communist" if its revolution is successful.

In a section on liberation theology, the guide says: "The government and military in many Central American countries do not like liberation theology because they think that speaking out against the government for human rights abuses or organizing to demand better wages makes people 'Communist.'"

The study guide was distributed to all the schools in the state for a nominal fee under an arrangement with the *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*, which published it in a "global education supplement." The newspaper has also published a global curriculum supplement on peace education, which shows that Minnesota's ideological approach to Central America is not an anomaly. Compiled by Bob Erickson, the director of the state's Global Studies Resource Center, the supplement focuses exclusively on the "peace education" views of Todd Pierson, head of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility. Pierson also appeared last March at the Minnesota Council for the Social Studies conference as the sole speaker on: "How does a teacher present a balanced and informed picture of the Soviet Union when so much misinformation and bias abounds?"

In fact, CARC and ESR are not the only local group taking advantage of Minnesota's global curriculum for political purposes. Friends for a Non-Violent World runs a "youth and militarism" project that works to inject its view on military questions into the schools. Like CARC, the group runs a speakers' bureau and publishes materials for use in the classroom. A flyer distributed by the group to Minnesota students stated that it was trying to "identify 10-20 youth contacts for Twin Cities area schools"; to "speak to 30-50 classes" on anti-war topics; to "set up counter recruitment tables in 5-10 high schools"; and to "educate teachers, counselors, youth ministers and others who work with youth." The project's newsletter is distributed to high school guidance counselors across the state, according to coordinator Patty Wright. She estimates more than 1,000 students were reached last year by her group.

The Minnesota Council of American-Soviet Friendship, the local chapter of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, a group founded by the Communist Party USA, has also gotten into the act. Robin Lindberg, a member of the local group, spoke to a class of first-grade students at St. Anthony Park Elementary School on "Soviet culture and peace" issues. A July 7, 1987 article in the *People's Daily World* lauded the Minnesota Council's work at the school in an article head-

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lined "First-graders say 'da' and learn about kids in the Soviet Union."

There is no doubt that CARC, too, is having an important effect in Minnesota's classrooms. The latest newsletter from Minnesota's global education center, Winter 1988, touts as "impressive" and "commendable" the activities at Minneapolis's Longfellow Elementary School in relation to a trip one of Longfellow's students recently took to Nicaragua with her parents. The student, Martha Weiss, moved to Nicaragua with her parents for nine months to teach in a Sandinista school. The girl's father is Larry Weiss, a former captain of the Weather Underground. Her mother is Pam Costain, the founder of Women Against Military Madness and new director of CARC. The newsletter explains that before their departure last year, Pam Costain visited every Longfellow classroom to speak about the trip and collect supplies to equip the Sandinista school in Nicaragua, a school named, Costain averred, "like all Nicaraguan buildings, for a martyr of the revolution."

The junior and senior classes at Annandale High School in Annandale, Minnesota, recently spent a day in a discussion of Central America. Among the speakers were Anne Winkler, mentioned above; Mary Turck, a CARC board member; Dick Bancroft, a member of the CARC speaker's bureau; and Jim Shapiro, a member of CISPES. At CARC's suggestion, the Annandale students prepared themselves for the event by reading Faith Adams's tendentious state-sponsored Central America "study guide."

At Como Park Senior High School in St. Paul, students learn about Central American politics in a Spanish language class taught by Miriam Peterson, who has invited CARC-affiliated speakers into the classroom. Peterson says she has encouraged students to participate in protests against U.S. policy in the region and to write letters to the U.S. Congress against contra aid. The students get credit for "being globally aware," Peterson says. When one student complained about the one-sided picture of the Central American conflict presented in class, he was told the other side would be allowed to speak only if the student himself could arrange for a speaker. As far as Peterson was concerned, she says, her class had already heard "the truth," the same truth now wafting through classrooms across Minnesota—and who knows where else. □

Thomas Mallon

BY THE LATE MORNING'S LIGHT

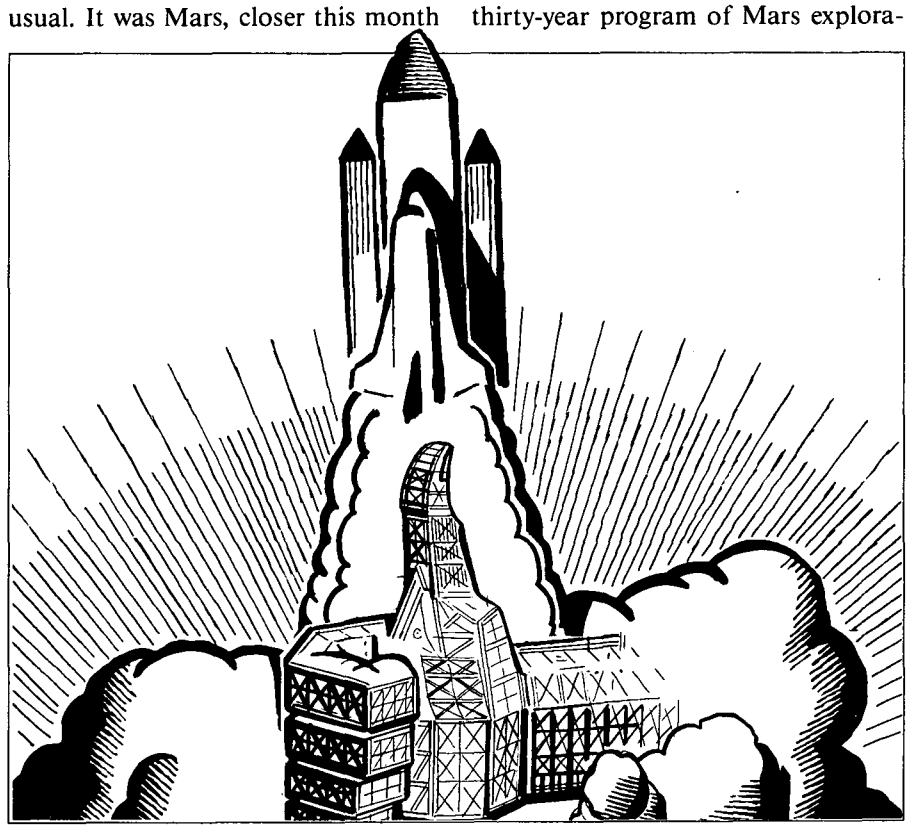
The first shuttle launch since *Challenger* raised questions about the future and purpose of America's presence in space. From the Cape, a first-hand report.

Late Tuesday night, September 27, at the Holiday Inn on Merritt Island, Florida, about ten miles south of Cape Canaveral, the moon, like a neglected mistress, was looking down on the outdoor pool, the floodlit palm trees, and the porno-receptive satellite dishes. Throughout the hotel and all over the island, people were thinking about the relaunching of the space shuttle, only thirty-six hours away. The mood officially declared by local chambers of commerce was resolute enthusiasm: GO DISCOVERY! read the fast-food marquees along Rte. 520 and State Road 3.

But the native boosterism, like the space program itself, was tinged with nostalgia. "Back to the Future" read one popular button, leaving its observer to realize that a successful launch could only put us where we had been three years ago, before *Challenger*. A big press-kit button (made in Canada) showed the phone number for more information about Florida's Space Coast: 1-800-USA-1969, the last four digits inviting one to think: what a falling off was there. Down the road from the hotel one could enter a small establishment called "Apollo Hair Systems"—a baldness clinic. Perhaps the least onward-and-upward signs of all were the green ribbons hung all over town: meant to convey faith that everything was "go for launch," they instead gave subliminal stimulus to memories of hostages, terror, and Carter-like malaise.

There was however, one sight to be seen Tuesday night, a light, one that could, if we wanted it to, be pointing unequivocally into the future. In the southeastern sky, only about 36,000,000 miles above the pool, it was shining much more invitingly than usual. It was Mars, closer this month to Earth than at any time since 1971, the year before we abandoned the moon.

On July 7 the Soviet Union launched Phobos I, an unmanned probe, to the Martian moon. "Sometimes we surprise ourselves with how bold we are becoming," Dr. Roald Z. Sagdeyev, head of the Space Research Institute, was quoted as saying of the temporarily predictable glasnost with which the steps and technologies of the Soviets' thirty-year program of Mars exploration are now being debated. As it happens, Phobos I began spinning uselessly out of control late in August, but that wasn't as big a setback as one might think: a Phobos 2 had already gone up on July 12.



A police state, a plan, a probe, a planet. The Soviets are committed to going. By contrast NASA has a whole palette of splashy ideas—they've looked great in the newsmagazines these past few months—and a firm commitment for none of them. At the rate we are going, the Soviets won't bury us; they'll just pass us in the cosmos's left lane. We can even give them the maps, which we've had for more than a decade: 97 percent of Mars was charted by the barely remembered Viking probes of the seventies.

But late on L-2 (Tuesday, two days before launch) there was no time to think about these things; however unsure of its destination, America was once more ready, in the words of Chuck Yeager and Alan Shepard, to "light the candle."

The networks and wire services have permanent quarters at the Kennedy Space Center press site, small structures with bright logos that look like beachfront condos. At certain moments on L-1, Wednesday, one can see condensation on their big picture windows: the NASA habit is to air-condition facilities to the point where

Thomas Mallon's most recent book is the novel Arts and Sciences *(Ticknor & Fields).*

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the agency's real business seems to be not space research but cryogenics. Most outfits smaller than the networks make do with trailers, and there are at least four times as many reporters here now than were present on January 28, 1986. Even that launch had attracted more than what was, by then, usual. There had been that day the human-interest angle: the teacher going up.

At 8:30 a.m. today the white press dome serving all the media is filled with reporters trying to find out if they're sheep or goats. For this launch NASA has adopted a two-tier system of access. A card with a mere orange stripe will allow you on the press site only until midnight. After that you're to be cleared out of the KSC and made to watch the liftoff from the causeway. What one wants instead, like an immigrant, is the "green card"—a badge that, after midnight, will allow one back onto the press site for a view from the bleachers in front of the huge digital countdown clock. There's a lot of resentment and perplexity about the restrictions. Are they trying to limit the number of pictures of another accident to, say, 1,000 instead of 5,000? What's the point?

The dome tries to maintain the same sunniness of the local merchants. It's ringed with an assortment of foreign flags (there's China's but the USSR's?), and the walls are decorated with spectacular photos of past liftoffs that have been signed and donated by press regulars. A banner, sounding like a network's fall-season promo, declares: "America's Pride: The Journey Continues." And there are more green ribbons. Behind the foreign reporters' assistance desk is a small sketch of the seven *Challenger* astronauts, bordered in black. Elsewhere there's a small, almost cheerful, needlepoint memorial to them.

Little green countdown clocks say -11:00:00. We're in a prolonged, built-in hold that allows the ground crews to catch up on their work. Lists of "Photo Opportunities" and "Bus Departures" are posted, as is "Shuttle Weather," updates of conditions at the Cape and the various landing sites, scheduled and emergency. The latest information is marked in black wax pencil, an anachronistic touch, as if everyone were here keeping watch on Lindbergh or Amelia Earhart.

I overhear one reporter telling another: "If you want to see the rock fall, you gotta be there." This seems a bit much in the hard-boiled humor line, until I realize he's saying that on Monday he plans to be in California, at Edwards, for the landing.

At 9 a.m. there is a press briefing from Frank Merlino, NASA Test Director at the KSC. You can attend it inside the auditorium or you can watch it on NASA Select Satellite SATCOM F-2R, Transponder 13—which is to say, the TV monitors in front of the press bleachers and inside the dome. There is standing room only inside the auditorium, and a row of video cameras on tripods, like a firing squad, at the back; but the questions are mild and predictable, as if the reporters don't want further to worry a man who's already got so much on his mind. What is the mood of the launch team? "I think they're excited and looking forward to tomorrow." Can he elaborate on "the abrasion on the forward thruster"? It's not a problem. Is there "more attention to duty" now? Well, yes. That much he has to say. Like most NASA officials he has the job of assuring the public that everyone's being super-careful this time even though they were never really sloppy before. There is little inclination on the press's part to pursue this into the realm of contradiction. What does one expect them to say?

A reporter asks about the "AFE" problem—"acronyms for everything"—the briefing's real laugh line, a preface to a real question about the FSS, the Fixed Service Structure at the pad. The heavy woman next to Merlino reminds us that there is an "acronym dictionary" available in the dome. An alumna of the Phyllis Oakley Spokesperson School of Imperturbability, she weeds out questions not dealing strictly with the "launch process," saving Mr. Merlino from any heavy going, however unlikely, and reminding the press that they can ask anything they like at the 1:00 p.m. briefing from higher-ups.

"I like the process," Mr. Merlino says when he's asked about the new leadership role the astronauts have been given since *Challenger*. The final decision on whether to launch will come tomorrow morning from Captain Robert L. Crippen, who flew the first shuttle with John Young, back in 1981. Minutes before liftoff, he's supposed to poll a 21-member management team—engineers, contractors, a weatherman, a safety expert—before he himself says, finally, yes or no. With this life-and-death power, he is in some ways the big story here, the emotional focus, almost as a single Mercury astronaut would have been a quarter-century ago. From the moment Project Gemini began sending two men into space instead of one, the mythic lone-eagle aspect of launching was lost. The truth is that if two men—or seven—blow up, those witnessing the catastrophe will feel less anguish than if it were only one. Circuses shoot one man out of a cannon instead of five, not for cost-effectiveness, but because the single death is a fate, a destiny; the multiple one—like an Asian earthquake—seems too haphazard to engage our imaginations in the same way. If *Discovery* blows up tomorrow, five stories will be too many to absorb. In a day or two, boyish Pinky Nelson, the most colorful of the crew, will get mixed up in our minds with Colonel Covey or Commander Hauck. But people here will remember Captain Crippen as the man whose life was shattered by saying yes.

One looks out across the grass, across the water, and thinks: it can't possibly make it; it's too big, too ugly, asymmetrical, not a flying thing at all.

The purpose of STS-26 (the twenty-sixth flight of the Space Transportation System) is to test out the hundreds of changes made to equipment and procedures since *Challenger* and the Rogers Commission, and to launch, from the shuttle's cargo bay, TDRS-C, Tracking and Data Relay Satellite-C, into a geosynchronous orbit of the earth. Pushed up to 22,300 miles, it will be on a sort of celestial treadmill, flying at the same speed the planet does, and therefore, more or less, standing still. Cooperating with TDRS-A, it will eliminate the need for the necklace of tracking stations NASA has had to maintain for three decades in intermittently friendly countries around the globe. TDRS-A has been in the skies since 1983; TDRS-B blew up with *Challenger*.

Aside from releasing TDRS-C, the *Discovery* crew will do the usual array (or at least four days' worth) of onboard experiments, and will broadcast a tribute to the crew of STS-25 (*Challenger*). But there is really only one purpose to this mission, and everybody knows it; STS-26 is about finding the nerve, once more, to get up on the high wire.

The real problem of the shuttle is that, like TDRS-C, it is essentially going nowhere. In his book *Entering Space* (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, rev. ed. 1986), STS-14 astronaut Joseph P. Allen, intending not irony but enthusiasm, wrote that the "astronauts aboard each shuttle mission are no longer simply space explorers but, rather, a collection of skilled space workers . . ." *Simply* explorers! There are those who argue that man is unnecessary in space, that all these satellites can be as easily launched and manipulated by remote control. (The Air Force, in particular, is not happy with the shuttle and would rather send up some of its payloads on refurbished Titan boosters.) In rebuttal, NASA continues to talk of how there are certain quick-decision contingencies to which man's nifty brain responds better than a computer's. These statements usually suffer from sounding defensive and sentimental, but the truth is that they're not sentimental enough. If man isn't good enough to go into space as an end in himself, for his own willful pleasure, then what's a rocket for?

At 10 a.m. on L-1 a press bus drives out to the ghost-town portions of the KSC, the places where, twenty-five years ago and more, not hand-wringing but chest-thumping was the order of the day. First we pass the inhumanly scaled Vehicle Assembly building; then a white sphere, looking like the Montgolfier brothers' balloon, holding liquid nitrogen; then the parked crawler that gets 18 feet to the gallon when it takes the shuttle from the VAB to the pad; and then Pad 39-B, where the shuttle itself, still scaffolded by both the Rotating Service Structure (RSS) and FSS, points the dull reddish head of its liquid fuel tank toward tomorrow morning.

After a stop there the pad numbers drop and the years fall away. Past 34, site of the 1967 Apollo fire that killed Gus Grissom, Ed White, and Roger Chaffee; past 19, off which Geminis flew; and on to the most audacious one of all, 14, from which Glenn, Carpenter, Schirra and Cooper rose, an eerie silver 7, entwined with the symbol of Mercury, now standing on the spot, celebrating the first group of astronauts. Beyond that lie the covered silos of an abandoned missile site, grass coming up through the bricks as if they made up city sidewalks instead of lids on Armageddon. And then we reach an early Redstone rocket, looking like a smaller version of the black-and-white Cape Canaveral lighthouse built in 1868.

Inside the musty blockhouse of launch complex 26 one can touch the toggle switch that sent *Explorer I* into orbit, a few months behind *Sputnik*, and look at a roomful of huge Univac-style equipment, all of the information it held now stowable in a single laptop.

That was then; this is now—a time when we know more than we know what to do with.

At 1:00 p.m. most of the press are in the bleachers, cans of diet soda and mosquito repellent beside their keyboards, for a briefing from five

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officials, including Rear Adm. Richard H. Truly, the former shuttle astronaut who is now Associate Administrator for Space Flight, and Dale D. Myers, NASA Deputy Administrator. Truly and Myers and the three others sit between the bleachers and the countdown clock at a dais made of crudely smoothed concrete; it evokes the Flintstones, though one supposes the designer was striving for something lunar.

Once again, the adversarial mood is decidedly muted. There's even an isolated "hear, hear" from the bleachers when, in an opening announcement, the weather is said to be looking good for tomorrow morning. The gentle questions follow. Someone from *Aviation Week* asks Myers, who wears a black eyepatch, to contrast the current mood with that immediately after *Challenger*. He compares the change to the recovery of spirit that took place after the '67 Apollo fire. Lynn Sherr of ABC asks if there isn't perhaps too *much* caution this time. Truly says that maybe there's some paperwork they could "tease out of the system"—but, of course, "you can't have too much safety," and space flight will never be without risk. It will also never be cheap, he tells the BBC man who inquires about all the boats and planes that will be deployed in the area tomorrow.

Can the space program survive another disaster? Myers says yes: "The issue of continuity is to me inevitable. . . . Americans want to explore." But continuity won't extend to every office. Asked whether, since the astronauts will have their lives on the line tomorrow, they think their jobs should be on the line, too, one of the men says: "I think I do."

Truly says, just before a good wind blows into the reporters' sunburning faces, that they're not going to push the weather "one iota."

Looking beyond tomorrow morning, Myers notes that a space station will take us "either to the Moon or Mars," putting them, at least, into a climactic sequence. The rest of his forecast is less than ringing. He reminds us that building a space station is administration policy—we're signing a treaty with our allies tomorrow in Washington; they're going to be helping us—but he can't tell us that going to Mars is official policy, because it isn't. The shuttle is "the key for support for the space station," he says; it's "still a vital part" of the program—which makes it sound more like Old Paint than a snorting charger.

But the "future of the program" isn't the story today. The only story is whether or not the astronauts will survive the flight. As if to underline this, a fire truck and ambulance can suddenly be heard racing in the distance. The five officials, in an act of collective will, decide it's not worth turning around to watch.

Questioned about press restrictions, Truly says that they are the result not of *Challenger* but of other recent findings—like the "dispersal" problem noted after the recent accident with a Titan 34-D. He seems to be talking about a more generous geographical fall of missile shrapnel than was once thought to occur. Oh.

But enough of that. "The American space program is not going to stop, manned or unmanned," says Truly: a hundred years from now reporters will be questioning people sitting where he now sits about trips to Mars, lunar outposts. Still, the cheerful ex-astronaut adds, as if to appease the gods, another accident is "inevitable . . . in the cards."

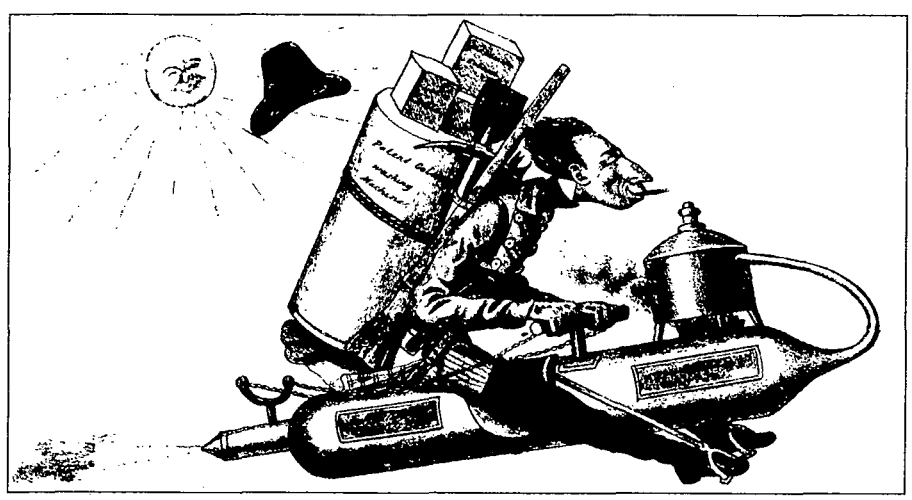
The shuttle, says NASA, is "still a vital part" of the space program—which makes it sound more like Old Paint than a snorting charger.

The afternoon passes lazily. The RSS has been rolled back, and reporters sitting in the bleachers gaze across the grass and water at the *Discovery*'s three conical boosters like tourists who've decided to rest their feet in front of the Taj Mahal or the Kremlin. At 5:00 p.m. all the local anchors sent down here come out to do "stand-ups" near the countdown clocks. They wear great looking blazers and blouses, and male or female have hair sprayed to withstand winds stronger than ones it would take to scrub tomorrow's launch. These anchors, telegenic and under-informed, are the androids of the whole business, made, it seems, of Velcro and Naugahyde. The press in the bleachers, who have been living on Cremora and doughnuts for the last couple of days, pay them little mind. (At times today Congressman Bill Nelson, who got to take a Jake Garn joyride on STS-24, the shuttle just before *Challenger*, can be spotted in the press dome hoping to be interviewed. He'd have more takers if he looked less Brokavian. Most people assume he's an anchor.)

At 6:00 p.m. everyone boards buses for the sunset photo op. First there's the chance to take several thousand stills and miles of video of the shuttle from about 2500 feet. "Can anybody watch it from here?" someone asks a NASA rep, meaning can they watch it from here tomorrow morning. "If you want to die," she cheerfully replies. The pad is fringed with thin poles, which hold the remote-operated cameras that will film the launch and keep the press photographers from incineration.

NASA, despite its fixed smiles and uninflected voices, is quite mindful of theatricality, and it saves the best for last. By 7:30 p.m. the sky is purple and the press are taken to a second stop, probably no more than a thousand feet from the pad. As the sky gets darker, the floodlights on the shuttle are incrementally brightened, prompting a restrained version of the oohs that come on summer nights between a really good firework's flare and boom. Several thousand more pictures; more miles of videotape, all of it of an empty, motionless rocket. The clicking and the whirring, weird and worshipful, goes on and on in the dark and nobody cares about the mosquitoes and the sandspurs because nobody wants to leave. It's suddenly clear that this is not Old Paint, it *is* a charger, the night before the race of its life, and no one wants to say good night to it, no one wants to stop stroking its beautiful mane with his lens.

But eventually the buses back to the press dome must be boarded, and when one gets there one notices that the countdown clock, frozen all day at T-11:00:00, is now moving. The floodlit shuttle, now more like Rockefeller Center than the Taj Mahal, can be seen in the distance, or you can watch a continual live shot of it, just standing on the pad, on the TV monitors in the dome. The NASA reps remind everyone that the site will be cleared by midnight. If you've got a green card you can come back; and if you're wise you'll be back inside the KSC gates well before 4 a.m. A million and a half people are thought to be coming to watch the launch, most of them from campers and RVs they've already started parking on the roadsides.



Having secured an unmerited green card and cleared four checkpoints with it, I am back at KSC before 2 a.m., and an hour and a half after that am in Multifunction Facility K6-1145—the cafeteria and gift shop. It's near the corner of Saturn Causeway and Instrumentation Rd., just down from the old moon rocket that lies like an immense beached hypodermic, thrown away after injecting the species onto its first extraterrestrial sphere. At 3:30 the place is pretty crowded. Still, I'm having trouble staying awake and warm, so I decide to cross the road to the KSC fire station and ask if I can talk to some of the people on duty tonight.

Jerry Angel and Bill Meeks have been at the Cape for more than twenty years each. Both of them were off the day *Challenger* blew up, but Angel, who was out in the woods 45 miles away, could tell even from there that something had gone wrong: "You couldn't have felt any worse if you'd been right there."

He says, "We're supposed to save lives and put out fires, but that's just in between." Their real business is preparing for launches. How do they feel tonight? "I'm a little bit apprehensive," allows Meeks. They agree that people at the Cape are especially serious now—not that things were ever really sloppy. But they can recall how before *Challenger* the occasional standby (having a firetruck nearby while something like welding went on) was eliminated. Not anymore.

Jerry Angel and Bill Meeks remember Apollo, and they agree things were more exciting then. Meeks says he felt "a part of history." But Angel guesses that the novelty wears off anything, and you've got to remember he was 25 when he started here. Still, there is something special about the morning that's only a couple of hours away. Angel's wife and 75-year-old father-in-law are coming, and Meeks's wife recently told him to try to get her a pass, one of seven allotted to the fire station. She hadn't asked for one in years.

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There is great American enthusiasm for space—only 18 percent in one recent poll would trim the NASA budget—but neither side in the vacuous presidential campaign really bothered to tap it. The Republican platform urged a Mars mission around the year 2000, and Bush supported the space station. Dukakis, after having wanted it cut back (surprise) during the primary season, showed up in Huntsville in August to say he was all for it. The Democrats' platform had no space plank. Dukakis said we should talk to the Soviets, and just about everyone else, about going to Mars. (Hey, guys, we could put on a show!)

The fact is that no one spoke with real specificity—or much interest. So where does that leave us? There's no point in dreaming of private enterprise and Mars. Only government—not Morton Thiokol—will get us there. The appropriations are simply too massive and, even more to the point, only government can provide the inspiration. One more thing Jerry Angel and Bill Meeks agree on is that people at NASA do feel as if they're working for their country, not just punching some multinational's clock. I ask Angel if he thinks we ought to go to Mars, and he says, "That's all beyond me," but it's plain that if his country would only sound the call, he and Bill Meeks would gladly put their shoulders to the gyroscope.

By 7 a.m. the sun and the astronauts are up, but there is a problem with the weather: it's lovely. The onboard computers are programmed for stronger, autumn winds, and the ones now in the upper altitudes are officially described as "springlike." The computers can't cope. You can feel everyone in the press dome getting ready to write the afternoon headline: GOOD WEATHER SCRUBS LAUNCH. Things proceed pessimistically, though at 7:20 Frank Merlino says the crew can suit up, and fifteen minutes later he tells them to go to the pad. All sorts of preparations and problem-solvings continue—the balky fan in Colonel Covey's suit; a bad fuse; garbled voice checks—yet they seem to be going on just in case there's a change in the weather.

But hours pass and the issue seems forgotten. Around 11:00 word comes that the latest weather balloon shows wind conditions are better, i.e., worse. Nothing definitive gets said, but now the assumption is that it will go. The "window" lasts until 1:30 today; there are still more than two hours available—except for the six minutes from 12:13 to 12:19 during which a collision with the Soviet space station would be possible. Nervous laughter in the bleachers: STAR WARS. Actually, the best indication of how behind we are in this whole business.

And yet, it all suddenly seems to be moving too fast. At 11:15 Captain Crippen is taking his poll. At 11:25 he says it's going to go, and cheers go up. The count resumes, after the last built-in hold, at T-9 minutes.

There is a great American enthusiasm for space, but neither side in the vacuous presidential campaign really bothered to tap it.

One looks out across the grass, across the water, and thinks: it can't possibly make it. It's too big, too ugly, asymmetrical, not a flying thing at all. But the flames have begun to force their way out of it, and it lifts. At first one hears only the still-even voice of the Shuttle Launch Controller, and the applause, and the screams, but then it's past the tower, and going faster, rolling, as it's supposed to, like a great whale, and an immense crackling forest-fire roar washes toward the bleachers, vibrating them and the ribs of everyone standing and crying.

After a minute it is gone, into a fluff of cumulus. But gone safely? Beyond T + 73 seconds? The moment everyone wants to get past? Can you trust your ears, knowing how long the crackle probably took to get across the water and grass? But your ears don't matter, because it's just been spotted, between two clouds, higher still, in a patch of wild blue yonder, and now you know that it's going to make it, and you search your mind for the first descriptive words it can think of, and they come, feeble and appropriate: like nothing on God's earth.

Later, you realize that the camera, after all, lies. It isn't really a visual experience. What you remember is the sound, the feel of your hands on the plank of wood in front of you. It isn't even a technological experience. It's too primitive—more like a volcano, something erupting amidst, because of, prayer and fear. Something that will have meaning only if the tribe gives it meaning.

Forty minutes later I'm sitting in the auditorium watching instant replay after instant replay of the launch, taken from the different remote cameras and a helicopter, and available for use by the TV news people. The *Discovery*'s crew are already sailing over Madagascar, and outside, over pad 39-B, dark clouds are gathering and rain is ready to fall. There's a strange Good Friday feeling. Even stranger is the sight of the FSS without the rocket. How can it be gone? It's as if one were crossing Lexington Ave. and looked up to see that the Chrysler Building, which was there just a minute ago, had somehow disappeared. The explanation that the *Discovery* isn't there *because it's flown away* seems implausible.

The event, however, is established. It's also over. The TV and newspaper people are making for Houston. The parking lot is emptying with no more trouble than if a concert or ballgame had just gotten out.

At 11:30 I fall asleep with "Nightline" going at the foot of the bed. Thomas Paine, former head of NASA, is having a split-screen debate with former NASA historian Alex Roland. Paine is saying we need to go to Mars now, and Roland, echoing something Senator Proxmire has said ("Space is going to be there for a long time"), insists that the heavens can wait. Paine, who favors colonization (as opposed to the mine-and-run moon missions), declares his confidence that the first generation of Martians is already toddling around down here on Earth. Roland doesn't see the point of trying to do something before the technology is really ready.

Paine is the one making, if you will, common sense. You can apologize and justify and rationalize why we've been doing this for thirty years. You can read U.S. GPO pamphlet 1986-0-730-017/41011, "Space Program Spinoffs," and nod approvingly at news of new flame-resistant materials, the REDOX battery, dental arch wire, and Thermaflex ("being used in the development of a 'stay-dry' bicycle seat"), but you will be avoiding the truth that, from the beginning, this has all been directed toward saying goodbye. As Michael Collins, the only real writer to come out of the astronaut corps, puts it in *Liftoff* (Grove Press, 1988): "In a fundamental way Project Apollo was about leaving, the first move outward . . . I don't want to feel a lid over my head, or the heads of my children." Let's try to go with the Russians, he says, but let's be prepared to go by ourselves "if the promised collaboration does not materialize." It won't, of course. Two countries that can't keep ballet dancers, wheat, and Olympic athletes flowing reliably between them from year to year will not find a way to hold hands for thirty years and 75 million miles.

If we go, we will go alone. President Reagan, whose only memorable contribution to space exploration will remain the words he spoke the day of the *Challenger* accident, was, nonetheless, in September, given enough wing by his lame-duck status to revive a nineteenth-century imperial cry, declaring: "It is mankind's manifest destiny to bring our humanity into space, to colonize this galaxy. And as a nation we have the power to determine whether America will lead or follow." If we go, we should go now, rather than wait for the more comfortable technology or for the depleted ozone layer to evict us. Ego and nationalism are not unworthy propellants, and in any case they will burn away to nothing in the first wholly alien atmosphere we reach, where everything will be unrecognizable and where, reinvented, we may somehow at last know ourselves for what we are.

George Will has observed that "We haven't had a space policy since May 25, 1961." He was referring, of course, to President Kennedy's declaration, made that day to Congress, that we should pursue the "exciting adventure of space" and reach the moon "before this decade is out." There are two other Kennedy quotations we ought to be keeping in mind now. One of them isn't really his, but Robert Frost's (from "The Gift Outright") and was recited at the inauguration: "The land was ours before we were the land's. . . ." Which is to say, it was our fate to seize it; only having done that were we free to surrender to it, to sink roots, to be possessed by it, addicted to it as to home, the eventual absence from which makes one sick. But if we so fear homesickness that we are afraid to seize the next place, it will no doubt be our fate to die from a graver sickness, failure of nerve. As a nation we will shrink to Holland, and as a species we will be the passenger pigeon.

The second Kennedy quotation is his peroration, in which he said that "here on earth God's work must truly be our own." Those words were reduced to a half-truth eighty-two days later, on April 12, 1961, when Gagarin went into orbit around the planet, a severance that one day we will realize as the equivalent of the first division of a cell in the Earth's biosphere. From then on we have had the chance to do God's work in the heavens, and a motive for leaving far stronger, finally, than any to do with science or adventure. Having been granted, outright, a second gift, the know-how, we should be mindful that God is not likely to forgive us, if we fail to use it in order to meet Him, literally, halfway. □

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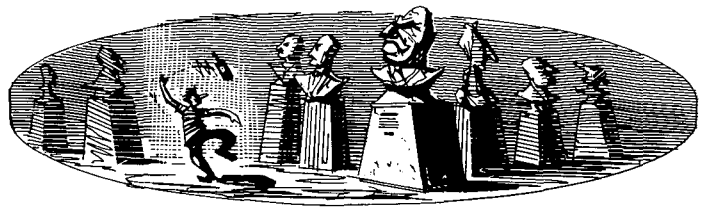

THE LITTLEST EX-PRESIDENT

by Joseph Rodota

We knew in 1980, of course, that Jimmy Carter was mean-spirited, ill-mannered, and short-tempered. What we didn't know then was that he was on his best behavior.

Since leaving office, Jimmy Carter has blasted Ronald Reagan for the 1986 bombing of Libya; praised Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's "excellent" arms control policies; defended the foreign policy meddling of House Speaker Jim Wright; and confidently asserted: "We had very few outbreaks of terrorism when I was president." He has called George Bush "effeminate" and told Jerry Falwell to "go to hell." He has called the Democratic party "an albatross around my neck" and accused New York Mayor Ed Koch of stabbing him in the back. Even the hopelessly inoffensive *Time* magazine columnist Hugh Sidey has been a target, simply because Sidey once suggested that the Carter White House lacked class. "I asked the Lord to help me forgive Sidey," Carter says. "But so far the Lord has not responded."

So how *are* ex-presidents supposed to behave? Simple: with respect for the Oval Office and civility toward its occupants. They follow the example (among thirty-seven others) of Dwight Eisenhower. When, in 1965, reporters pressed Eisenhower on a train trip for his reaction to the invasion of South Vietnam by North Vietnam, and to President Johnson's request for $700 million in arms to fight the Communists, Ike kept his counsel. He later wrote Johnson:

> At almost every stop along the way, I was asked by some newspaperman about the situation in Vietnam. I have consistently said (and shall continue to say) that, first, we should all understand that there is only one spokesman for America in conducting our current foreign relations: the President of the United States. . . .
>
> To this I add that if there is any who oppose the President in his conduct of our foreign affairs, he should send his views on a confidential basis to the Administration; none of us should try to divide the support that citizens owe to their Head of State in critical international situations.
>
> With warm personal regard and great respect,
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Dwight D. Eisenhower

This should not be a terribly difficult example to follow, although in mitigation it is worth remembering that the aging Carters' first taste of retirement was bitter. Jimmy and Rosalynn returned to Plains humiliated and nearly broke. The peanut business was in the tank. Amy was careening towards puberty.

Seven years later, however, Jimmy has managed to patch his life together and make a few bucks. He has written books (three of them, one with the help of Rosalynn). He has supervised the construction of a $27 million presidential library and educational center. And he's become a fixture on the liberal charity circuit, sharing platforms with Ted Turner, John Denver, Yoko Ono, Houston socialite Dominique de Menil, and other former constituents. His friends have given him thirty-five china place settings for use at his presidential library. (The frugal Carters hadn't ordered any while at the White House.) In 1985, for the first time in five years, Jimmy Carter actually made the *Good Housekeeping* list of the Ten Most Admired Men (he was eighth—sandwiched between Bob Hope and Jacques Cousteau). And just this summer, the managers of the Democratic convention even let Jimmy speak during prime time from Atlanta.

Tom Wolfe

None of which has improved the Carter disposition. Jimmy is not the first President to attempt a little image-boosting after leaving the White House, of course, but he is unique in that he has attempted to salvage his reputation primarily by trashing his successor's.

Carter kept his mouth shut for most of Reagan's first term, but his simmering rage finally boiled over in March 1986, when he accused Reagan of "habitually" misstating the Carter Administration's record on defense modernization. Reagan had pointed out that under previous management our armed forces boasted planes that couldn't fly and ships that couldn't sail, for lack of spare parts and trained personnel. Carter told a *New York Times* reporter that Reagan was making statements about Carter-era defense policies "he knows are not true and which he personally promised me not to repeat." "Some of his statements," Jimmy said, "are almost more than a human being can bear."

The same reporter then confronted Reagan in the Oval Office. This exchange is drawn from the official White House transcript for the March 21, 1986 interview:

Reporter: We would like to give you a chance to respond to Jimmy Carter, who said some not too favorable things about you in a recent interview with the *New York Times*. He said you distort things, you exaggerate.

Reagan: . . . can you be specific? What are one or two of the things that he might have said?

Reporter: Well, he said that you have a habit of saying things that you know are not true, basically.

Reagan: Well, maybe he's just been too much victimized by that tendency for the media for a time to accuse me of gaffes, and that I am guilty of saying things that aren't true. . . .

Reporter: So you don't think you lie all the time? [Laughter.]

Reagan: No—so I don't have a habit of saying things that aren't true.

Reporter: Thank you.

Reagan: Why didn't he just accuse me of lying? [Laughter.]

Hours after the interview, Reagan telephoned the reporter. "It's been bothering me all day," he said. "I've been wondering all day about it. This whole thing—I felt very bad about it. It's not true I'm saying those things about him.

"I know I have made him a target on things like the economy," said Reagan. "But on defense, I knew in the last year, he himself recognized that defense was being shortchanged."

In rebuttal, Carter soon appeared on the "CBS Morning News." Asked if he was satisfied with Reagan's apology, Carter said, "Well, it depends on whether he's stopped misstating the facts. I hope he has seen the error of his ways and in the future he will tell the truth. This is something that he promised to do a couple of years ago, but, of course, he didn't do it."

Since then, Jimmy has gone on a spree.

In April 1986, he said that the Reagan Administration has "had no detectable achievements in foreign policy."

In May, after U.S. fighter planes bombed terrorist facilities in Libya, Carter lashed out at this "macho exertion of America's enormous power." Jimmy said he didn't think the bombing of Libyan targets "has reduced the incidence of terrorism—it's probably

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Joseph Rodota was deputy director of the White House public affairs office and now directs a research company in Sacramento, California.

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increased it." Of Moammar Qaddafi, who claimed to have lost a child in the bombing, Carter said, "If seventeen years ago, somebody had killed Amy, I would not have rested until her killer was punished."

In August, Carter said the Reagan farm policy "has been a disaster."

In September, he criticized Reagan over the handling of the Lebanese hostage situation. "He should have a much more aggressive policy for gaining their release," Carter said.

The same month, Jimmy condemned a routine nuclear weapons test by the United States as an "embarrassment and serious mistake" and said "the Reagan Administration has missed a wonderful opportunity for a comprehensive test ban in its determination to go ahead with the Star Wars program."

The gentleman-farmer from Plains couldn't find anything nice to say even as Reagan was en route to speak at the dedication of the Carter presidential library on October 1, 1986. A few hours before Air Force One touched down near Atlanta, Carter interrupted a tour of his presidential museum to declare, "We've had five-and-one-half years of no progress, even retrogression, for nuclear arms control."

On the eve of the Reykjavik summit later that month, Carter criticized Reagan for showing "extreme interest" in a meeting with Gorbachev. Immediately after the summit, Jimmy said that "Reagan missed a wonderful opportunity" by refusing to give up the Strategic Defense Initiative at Hovde House.

In March 1987, Carter visited Stanford University (currently run by his former Food and Drug Administration chief, Donald Kennedy) and announced, "I didn't see any greatness in sending troops to Grenada." The president who was in office when the Sandinistas came to power also said, "I think the major obstacle to progress toward peace in Central America under the Contadora umbrella or other initiatives has been the recalcitrance of the United States."

"In the 1970s," Carter told his attentive Stanford listeners, "under Ford and in my term, there were few who protested our nuclear policies because there was no doubt that we were supporters of nuclear arms control. At the time, the obstacles came from the Kremlin. Now the obstacles are in Washington."

Oh, for the days of killer rabbits!

Between book tours and international conferences on gum disease, the Carter clan racks up frequent-flier miles with excursions to various foreign capitals. In March 1986, Carter told a group of businessmen and diplomats in Cairo that Ronald Reagan "is more inclined to form a contra army to overthrow the Sandinistas or inject the Marines into Lebanon or use American battleships to shell villages around Beirut" than to negotiate peace agreements. He denounced what he called "missing leadership" in Washington. "President Reagan has not been inclined to use negotiation and diplomacy as a means to achieve our nation's goals nearly so much as have his Democratic and Republican predecessors," Carter said, adding, "I am not here to criticize my own government."

When Jimmy abruptly departed a Fourth of July party at the U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe, after five minutes of a twenty-minute attack on the United States by Mr. David Kariamizira (the Zimbabwean Minister of Youth, Sport, and Culture), the *Washington Post* assigned page one acreage to the story.

The Minister had blasted Reagan for bombing Libya, applying economic pressure to Ortega and Qaddafi, and ignoring "terrorism" committed by South Africa. "It was an insult to my country and an insult to me personally," said Carter. Later he had a chance to clarify. "It wasn't what he said," the ex-president told Bryant Gumbel on the "Today" show the morning after. "It

Religion and the Life of the Intellect

In many intellectual circles the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dimwitted and unlettered. Yet, recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, and amid inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious renaissance entail embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or superpatriotism. Nor does it imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, or human dignity. Rather, there's an awareness that, as Jean Bethke Elshtain put it, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political choices which are far more durable than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

The New York Times Magazine article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." We are particularly interested in exploring religious commitments that yield humane social consequences, as exemplified by such giants as St. Francis, Gandhi, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Tawney, Schumacher, Mounier, Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, Lech Walesa, Martin Luther King Jr., and Archbishop Romero. And we probe the literary and philosophical riches offered by such greats as Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Buber, Auden, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Waugh, Merton, C.S. Lewis, Simone Weil, Flannery O'Connor, and Graham Greene.

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was his way and the time he said it." The content, Jimmy added, was not "off the mark."

Closer to home, however, Jimmy Carter found himself deeply offended by the Iran-contra affair.

As the Reagan Administration was nearly consumed by the chaos of Iran-contra, Carter boasted: "We never considered, of course, paying any kind of ransom. We never delivered any weapons or any benefits to Ayatollah Khomeini."

"I wouldn't have been tempted," he told David Frost in December 1987. "To me, the bribery of kidnappers is unconscionable. It was never considered by me or any of my associates. . . ."

Gary Sick, a member of the Carter National Security Council, has written that on October 11, 1980—just a few weeks before the election—President Carter approved the shipment to the Ayatollah of $150 million in U.S. weapons which the Shah had ordered and paid for, but which had not been shipped.

Iran-contra, according to Carter, was even more serious than the transgressions of Richard Nixon. "Watergate was a very simple, relatively insignificant crime of breaking into an office and trying to steal some things from the Democratic Party," Carter said. "The Iran scandal has damaged our nation in . . . the Mideast Arabian Gulf area and internally as well."

But perhaps the best part about Iran-contra, from Jimmy's perspective, was that it provided a chance to relate his bizarre theories about why America turned him out of office in 1980.

David Frost asked Carter in December 1987 if he had "ever wondered at all whether supporters of President Reagan had contacts with [the Iranian government] to suggest a delay or suggest the timing of the release of the hostages?"

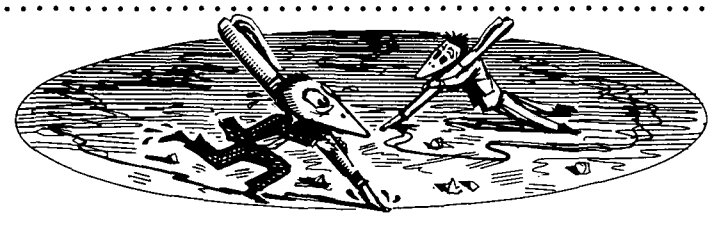
"Yes, I've wondered about it," Carter replied. "Those reports had been made to me, you know, for the last six years. . . . But it's not something that I care to pursue as an investigation. . . . It's not something that can be undone if it is true."

Carter had been peddling versions of this story for some time. "I wish I'd sent one more helicopter to Iran," Carter told *USA Today* in May 1986. "I think had our hostages in Iran been released early in the year, that I would have won the election without much of a problem."

"If Jimmy had bombed Tehran," Rosalynn told a press conference in Reno, Nevada in 1987, "he probably would have been re-elected, but you can't do something just to be popular."

In Jimmy Carter's hands, the presidency itself seemed somehow diminished; and now the littlest president has become the littlest ex-president. He conducts himself like a fired employee who traipses from job interview to job interview, cataloging the alleged inadequacies of the man who replaced him and castigating his former boss. Americans may not know precisely how ex-presidents should conduct their affairs, except that they should be dignified, gracious if possible, and, well, "presidential." Jimmy Carter, alas, has proved himself unfit for ex-office. □

AMONG THE INTELLECTUALOIDS



RUSSELL MEANS ON CUSTER HILL

by Wayne Michael Sarf

Imagine, if you will, the reaction if a handful of "activists"—installing, perhaps in the interest of fairness, a small monument to draft dodgers or fallen NVA regulars—were to dig up the sod in front of Washington's Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The vandals (assuming they had not been killed) would be promptly jailed, the offending monument removed, and the sod re-planted, while the citizenry howled for vengeance. Only one thing would arouse more public outrage and disgust: an announcement by our government that the illegal marker would stay in place.

Such a thing could not, of course, occur—not at that monument, anyway. But all war memorials are not created equal. On Sunday, June 25, 1876, five companies of the Seventh Cavalry under Brevet Major General George Armstrong Custer were annihilated by Sioux and Cheyenne warriors at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. In 1881 a Vermont granite monument, bearing the names of 263 officers, soldiers, Indian scouts, and civilians who had died with Custer (or with surviving detachments under Major Marcus Reno and Captain Frederick Benteen), was hauled in segments to the heart of Montana's Crow Indian country and erected atop "Last Stand" or "Custer Hill," where the bodies of Custer and some forty others had been found in positions indicating a last-ditch defense; in a grave surrounding the monument lie the bones of more than 200 soldiers. Dominating the hill and the white markers intended to show where each man fell, the weathered shaft is starkly impressive, sadly evocative of death.

On June 25, 1988, exactly one hundred and twelve years after Custer's death, Sioux "activist" Russell Means and an estimated forty followers entered the grounds of Custer Battlefield National Monument, along with others merely intent on observing "American Indian World Peace Day" (disconcertingly marked on the slaughter's anniversary). The ceremonies over, Means's flock (including whites with "Indian"-style false braids affixed to their heads) began an illegal march, ostensibly to reach the Reno-Benteen Battlefield over four miles away, but soon returned to the Hill; there, after reading a letter from white clergymen apologizing for the last few Centuries of Dishonor, Means treated his followers and scattered tourists to a speech indicating that Indian oratory had deteriorated markedly since the days of Chief Joseph.

"The whole thing is a lie. My heart bleeds when I think of people in that place," he said, pointing down to the visitor center and museum. For those swallowing the racist lie that at the battle the Indians had outnumbered the cavalry, Means (who had talked with unnamed Indian "elders") offered the truth: the cavalry had outnumbered the Indians. Did paleface archeologists affirm that hundreds of breechloading and repeating rifles were used against Custer? No problem:

> The recent archeological dig is a lie, claiming that Custer was outgunned. Where would we get all these automatic [sic] weapons and then what did we do with them? Throw them away? They never tell you about the wagon train up in the hills. We also gave them a sensitivity training session too. Eighty percent of the soldiers shot themselves because they were drunk. We uncovered all the whiskey kegs that they brought along to party with.

One is reminded of film star Tim McCoy's comment that the best way to learn an Indian's history is to tell it to him. But Means's unusual battle reconstruction was a logical result of the theory that no Indian need crack a book to learn about his ancestors, and that impudent whites citing contemporary sources (as I once did in trying to convince some Crow Indians that their ancestors wantonly slaughtered game) should be ignored. Unfortunately, Means neglected the "real story" deadpanned to battle buffs by Crows the previous year, proving that a wounded Custer had met death by suffocation at the hands—so to speak—of a large, vengeful Cheyenne woman sitting on his head.

The "Hitler monument"—and Custer—were Means's chief targets: "Can you imagine a monument listing the names of the SS, of Nazi officers, erected in Jerusalem?" Not surprisingly, he seemed unaware that it was over a century old: "Archeologists, anthropologists, and historians have produced a monument like that, a monument that was named for him, named for a mass murderer." While Means rambled, others produced shovels and began to dig into the mass grave. A blackish, 2½ ft. x 4 ft. steel plaque "emerged from the crowd" (as Park Superintendent Dennis Ditmanson later put it) and was hastily installed with bolts and quick-drying, water-doused cement. Crudely inscribed, apparently with a blowtorch, its legend ran: "In honor of our Indian Patriots who fought and defeated the U.S. calvary [sic] in order to save our women and children from mass-murder. In doing so, preserving rights to our

(continued on page 34)

Wayne Michael Sarf is the author of God Bless You, Buffalo Bill: A Layman's Guide to History and the Western Film.

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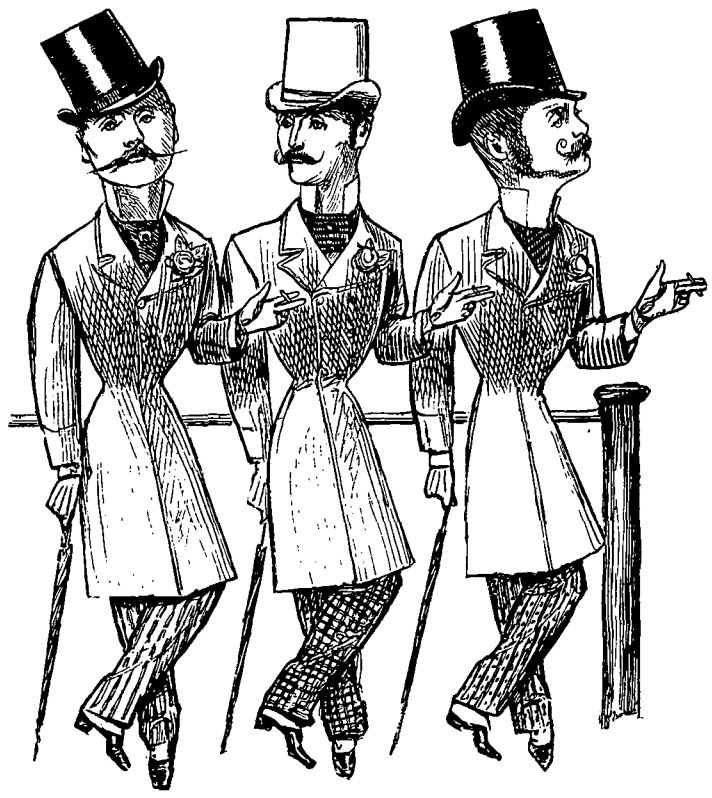

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Homelands, Treaties and Sovereignty. 6/25/88. G. Magpie, Cheyenne." (Since Sitting Bull, spiritual leader of the Sioux victors, painstakingly recorded his killings of women in pictographs, this concern for noncombatants seems lamentably anachronistic.) The Crows, aiding Custer against the "hostiles" occupying their lands, had wept over his defeat; yet among the plaque-planters was the Crows' befuddled tribal chairman, who (despite some Crow displeasure at the plaque) said he felt obliged to aid Indian visitors—and, presumably, tacitly accuse his own tribe of complicity in attempted "mass-murder."

Mounted Indians rode atop the grave, their horses defecating on it, and, like old-time warriors gaining credit by touching a fallen enemy, they "counted coup" on the monument with sticks.

In the normal course of events, the Meanites would have been stopped, arrested, and appropriately charged. But nothing happened. Superintendent Ditmanson's explanation of why they were not interrupted—the fear of sparking violence in a tourist area—sounded plausible; even William Wells, a director of the privately run Custer Battlefield and Historical Museum Association, declared himself "convinced people would have been killed" had anyone interfered. Yet it was never explained why so few security personnel were available to deal with Means (a known criminal with a history of irrational violence), despite Ditmanson's own admission that the NPS had learned of the threatened plaque-laying in late March.

But the fun was just starting. Warning whites, "You remove our monument and we'll remove yours," Means audaciously asked Ditmanson to initiate paperwork toward official approval of "G. Magpie's" handiwork. With no more right on the Hill than a discarded candy wrapper, the plaque was mysteriously invested with a quasi-legal status as Ditmanson passed to others the buck of *post facto* sanction, decreeing that it would remain until unspecified "courts" decided whether it should permanently adorn the grave—as though any court had a right to sanction such defilement. (In the meantime, of course, anyone trying to remove it would risk arrest.)

Among many others, Cooper T. Holt, executive director of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, asked whether such a small group could, "by a show of force, intimidate the NPS at a national monument and not be held accountable." The answer, apparently, was Yes—though National Park Service Director William Mott did not bother replying to such complaints, while the Park Service declined to release information on the incident.

Such bizarre acquiescence was not, could not be, inspired simply by physical threats. More likely, the "militant's" unique talent for exploiting guilt, and official anxiety to avoid even the appearance of harshness lest screams of "genocide" resound, had combined in a pattern of capitulation. The plaque's sheer ugliness makes it unlikely that honoring Indian combatants (or, by his own account, witnesses to mass suicide) was Means's main concern. Perhaps confrontation was the goal; as yet another radical has-been facing rebirth as a seventies trivia question, Means must behave obnoxiously to gain attention. Thus appeasement—perhaps *especially* appeasement—is no guarantee against "incidents," for the ante can always be raised and the list of grievances infinitely extended.

For the true militant, grievances are all the more enjoyable if held against people long dead whose efforts cannot be easily reversed. Gifted with second sight, those carving the 1881 monument might have granted Sitting Bull "equal time"; but as he had not even surrendered yet, this can hardly have been uppermost in their minds. Likewise, a stone in the park cemetery honoring soldiers who died "clearing" the Yellowstone district of "hostile Indians," upsets interpretive historian Mardell Plainfeather; but is there a seemly remedy? Even the seemingly fair-minded proposal to rename the Custer Battlefield "Little Bighorn National Battlefield" would inevitably demean Custer in effacing his name, while (for different reasons) the very museum exhibits can be easier to display than to undisplay; apparently to avoid shocking its donor, several administrations kept on view a watch-case (recently removed) which, while supposedly Custer's, was actually made for the Errol Flynn movie *They Died With Their Boots On*.

Though the first park superintendent cited "unhealed Indian wounds" in opposing a projected statue of Custer dominating the field, initial Army stewardship and Congress's 1939 authorization of the cemetery as a monument to Custer and his fallen did leave a "balance" problem. In one effort at relief, a cryptic quote from Sioux holy man Black Elk, "Know the power that is peace," was added to a visitor center wall—although, since Black Elk's own youthful exploits on the field had consisted largely of killing and mutilating the wounded, perhaps the phrase "or else" should have been added.

Left to stew in the knowledge that the Thing was still out there, buffs talked hopefully of a private-sector commando raid; in the meantime, certain NPS employees began "destabilizing" it by removing bolts, while a large local "mountain man" single-handedly wrenched it free—only to drop it back into place. Yet due to a near-blackout of news coverage, some members of the Little Big Horn Associates—an organization devoted to "Custeriana"—were unaware of the atrocity until the climactic banquet of their Canton, Ohio conference in July. (Our information packets included government inserts on AIDS—perhaps to induce nostalgia for the 1870s.) Superintendent Ditmanson rose to brief the hundred-odd diners, including Captain Benteen's granddaughter Luisa Benteen Steves and Custer's great-grandnephew, Colonel George Armstrong Custer III.

Then began a weird descent into Hedgespeak. Ditmanson readily told of "non-informational" meetings held with Means's group after he had learned of their plans. Yet he made no attempt to explain why security had been inadequate; or why the plaque was still in place; or what he planned to do. He was against removing the plaque. But he was also against covering it up, as this would not solve the (unspecified) "problem," and even suggested, horribly, that it might be displayed in the museum with a caption explaining its part in the battlefield's ongoing "history"—thus appeasing the vandals by enshrining their propaganda. (He produced a mild outcry by twice pointing out that the plaque accused no *individuals* of attempted mass-murder.) The evening's dirty little secret was the fear of angering the Meanites.

More frankly expressed was the fear that such malcontents could better manipulate the Fourth Estate. As Ron Nichols, president of the battlefield association, observed: "The Park Service can't win media battles—and they know it." Ditmanson thus asserted that keeping the plaque would thwart the vandals by denying them publicity. Yet even if one conceded the perils of trying to outmedia Means, Ditmanson's dread of controversy seemed grotesque; for controversy, and not the continued defilement of graves in his care, seemed for him the worst imaginable catastrophe. He had stated that he would recommend retaining the plaque until an authorized Indian monument appeared; but now, asked who had the *authority* to remove it (I could not resist interjecting loudly, "The Superintendent!"), he said he guessed *he* probably did—but declined to do it without Mott's say-so. When it was pointed out that his precedent left *all* our monuments and parks at risk, he actually conceded the point—but still refused to "get everything back on the front page of the newspapers."

I rose to declare it well within the superintendent's legal right to remove any "unsightly trash" on the battlefield—and point out that this was, after all, grave desecration of what Lincoln had termed "hallowed ground." Mentioning a suggested site for a future Indian memorial, I added that the plaque should have been removed as soon as the Meanites were out of sight. Ditmanson replied that they would have been back the next day, that some of them were "our neighbors," and that the site was "hallowed" to Indians as well—though, of course, no Sioux or Cheyenne graves were being desecrated in his park.

And that was easily the most disturbing thing that night—Ditmanson's inability to see just how revolting his audience would find the action (and inaction) of June 25. It was, perhaps, especially revolting due to an unspoken but emotional factor at work in more than one mind—the knowledge that most of Custer's men were not simply killed, but also sadistically mutilated, sometimes before death. "It is sickening to look at the bodies stripped," wrote one eyewitness. "Here a hand gone, here a foot or a head, gaudy gashes cut in all parts of the body gouged out, noses and ears cut off, and skulls crushed in." The calculated defilement of 1988 must have seemed a celebration of atrocity, another indignity heaped upon the defenseless slain.

But there is a difference. True, the Indian Wars were not conspicuous on either side for respect accorded enemy dead. Yet if we judge neither the Indians nor the whites of 1876 by our standards, we can avoid using their actions as excuses for today's sins. The men who defeated Custer were warriors—and when their monument is erected, it will honor the greatest Indian victory west of the Mississippi. Evidence of their warrior legacy is already provided by other stones at the battlefield: those marking the graves of Indian veterans at rest with their fellow servicemen in the National Cemetery.

One hesitates to attribute emotional reactions to men long dead. But one cannot imagine leaders such as Crazy Horse or Lame White Man being other than shamed by the burn-outs led by the shameless Means—smug jackals content with "counting coup" on bones a century dead. But one now expects such behavior from this non-leader and his non-following. Perhaps a deeper disgust should be directed elsewhere.

After almost two more months, the National Park Service screwed its courage to the sticking place. The plaque was removed (apparently with Means's permission) and triumphantly borne off—into the museum, where one can now see the government's dead soldiers defamed without fear of snakes or inclement weather. Russell Means may justly resent the fact that, despite his great influence in determining NPS policy, no one has suggested appointing him director. □

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OPEC AND THE NEXT PRESIDENT

by Irwin M. Stelzer

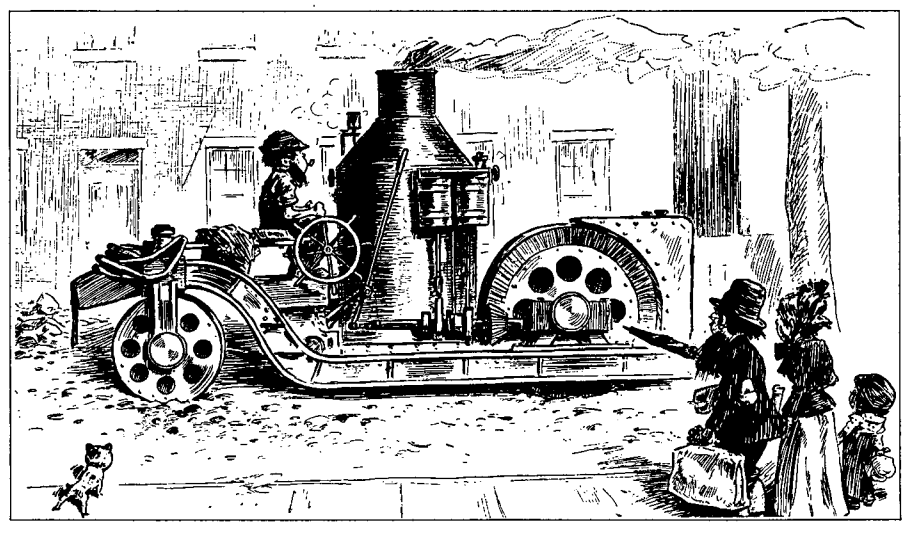
Between the time this piece is written and the time it is published, America will have elected a President. The winner will find himself deluged with memoranda and position papers. Among them will be several dealing with energy policy. Unfortunately, none is likely to meet government standards for truth-in-labeling. To do so, each would have to have emblazoned on its cover: "These recommendations are based on forecasts likely to prove wrong and wild guesses as to the future actions of a successful cartel."

There's little doubt that in the past most forecasts have been wide of the mark. Despite the development of apparently sophisticated modeling techniques—or perhaps because of their development—we seem unable to forecast whether the demand for energy will grow at all, much less by how much. A relatively few years ago, projections showing a growing need for power plants caused many electric utilities to bet their companies on future growth. They lost. More recent projections, showing that new capacity would not be needed for years to come, led to construction cut-backs—and to serious shortages in some regions of the country this summer. It seems that energy forecasters were invented to make economic forecasters look good. But that has not reduced the demand for still more forecasts—for every seer there's a sucker.

All energy prices are now affected—infected might be a better word—by the rapacious OPEC oil cartel. With oil prices falling rapidly, and likely to stay low for a while, it has become fashionable to consider OPEC a paper tiger. Not so. Even though its members regularly cheat on their quotas, OPEC must be counted as one of the world's most durable and successful cartels. Since they first flexed their muscles in 1973, OPEC's members have kept the price of oil far above the level that would prevail in a competitive market. They are sitting on some 7 to 11 million barrels of idle producing capacity, successfully keeping much of it off the market. Were there no cartel, this capacity would undoubtedly come into production, easily driving prices down to as little as one-half of current so-called depressed levels—below the $10 per barrel price reached in 1986.

So OPEC has the power, if it can agree on production cuts, to drive oil prices up, if not to previous heights, at least to levels well above those that would prevail in a competitive market. Whether or not OPEC's members and fellow-travelers *will* agree is, of course, beyond the predictive power of even the most successful economic model.

How, then, in light of the fallibility of our forecasting tools and our inability to predict the behavior of OPEC, is energy policy to be made? To answer that question, we must first look at how we made energy policy in the past. This is worth doing if only to avoid repeating our mistakes. After all, the perpetrators of yesterday's failures are waiting in the wings, memoranda in hand, urging a series of policies that range from turning off all nuclear plants to turning on massive, uneconomic research programs in the areas of conservation and renewable energy sources. Unembarrassed by the mess they created in the 1970s, they can't wait to get their hands on the levers of policy, access to which Ronald Reagan has denied them for eight long years.



The specific ingredients of past energy policies are too numerous and detailed to be discussed here. But by stepping back from the forest of regulations and programs concocted in pursuit of various energy policies, we can spot four major elements that recur in specific energy proposals. Indeed, these ingredients can be found in most proposals to tinker with the economy.

•*Lack of Faith in Markets:* The first is the belief that the market mechanism cannot be relied upon as the ultimate determinant of who shall use what fuels where, in what quantities, and at what cost. This belief has two bases. To begin with, many in government do not feel that the current distribution of income is "fair." From this it follows that distribution of goods and services in proportion to that (unfairly distributed) income, via the price system, is also unfair. One of the leading congressional powers on energy policy, for example, once privately lamented that if Congress didn't give the President standby gasoline rationing authority, "you're liable to see the people of this nation thrown into a rationing plan based on price." A somewhat more confusing basis for interfering with markets was offered by another congressman: "I think that the free-enterprise system is absolutely too important to be left to the voluntary action of the marketplace."

Such antipathy to the market as an allocative tool has another cause: the politician's fear that overtly higher prices for energy will result in his ouster. Consequently, he prefers tax-financed subsidies to visibly higher prices, on the assumption that Americans prefer to pay higher taxes in order to pay lower prices, rather than pay higher prices in order to have lower taxes.

•*The Sumptuary Mentality:* The second major element underlying bad energy policy is somewhat more difficult to describe. It can perhaps be best explained by analogy to the sumptuary legislation of earlier times. In the Middle Ages everyone accepted the notion that governments had the right to check what they deemed to be private extravagance, and to restrain luxury for the public good. On that assumption—that small is beautiful, less is more—the ancient Greeks and Romans enacted statutes limiting expenditures on funerals, per capita entertainment, and dress.

The appeal of such laws to those modern leaders who feel they know what is best for every citizen is obvious. President Carter once told his countrymen that "too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption. . . . Piling up material goods cannot fill the emptiness of lives which have no confidence or purpose." This was entirely consistent with his view that energy policy is the "moral equivalent of war," to be won by establishing a new conservation "ethic." From here it is an easy step to laws governing the size of our cars, how cool and warm we may keep ourselves, how and of what materials we shall build our homes—all determinations to be made by government, for our own well-being.

If we take a distrust of the price system and add to it the notion that we must have government regulations to prevent self-indulgence, we see the

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Irwin M. Stelzer is director of the Energy and Environmental Policy Center of the John F. Kennedy School, Harvard University, and an American correspondent for the London Sunday Times.

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beginnings of a regulation-oriented national energy policy, of which rationing is a necessary part. Such rationing does not necessarily mean ration coupons. It can be of a more subtle sort—the sort requiring that summer thermostats be set to a not-so-cool 78 degrees; that car pools and mass transit replace private transportation, and bicycles replace cars; and that frosty refrigerators and hand-cleaned ovens substitute human brawn for electrical energy.

•*The Anti-Risk Attitude:* The third element is the creation of an anti-risk atmosphere that forces private enterprise to cede the field to government. We attempt to create a risk-free society, one in which innovation is subordinated to safety, progress to risk aversion. The Three Mile Island nuclear accident, in which no one was hurt, contributed importantly to the end of the American nuclear program; overly elaborate drug testing may inhibit medical progress, and deprive dying people of drugs that regulators decide will endanger their lives; and the desire for foods that are risk-free in all quantities may yet starve us all. Risk aversion places such constraints on entrepreneurship as to tempt it to cede the field to government. Why risk building an enormous pipeline under conditions never before confronted, if some unforeseeable technical flaw will bring the government's wrath? Why risk investing in any new technology, if the inevitable "bugs" cause a spate of lawsuits or possible bankruptcy? Better to let the government do it.

•*National Security and Autarky:* A final basis for most energy policy proposals is that national security requires "energy independence," or autarky. Thus, President Nixon, launching Project Independence in 1973, told Americans, "Let us set as our national goal . . . that by the end of this decade we will have developed the potential to meet our foreign energy needs without depending on any foreign sources." (At the time of Nixon's speech, imports accounted for 35 percent of U.S. oil supply; they now account for almost half.)

The pursuit of self-sufficiency is a reaction to the shortages and massive price increases that have periodically characterized oil markets since the early 1970s. And it cannot be brought to a halt by an abundance of oil, such as we now have. Indeed, that very abundance has produced a new definition of an energy "crisis"—a supply glut and falling oil prices. Whereas the "shortage crisis" is to be avoided because of the macroeconomic effects of the resulting high prices (lower economic growth and wealth transfers from consumers to producers), the "glut crisis" is to be avoided because the resulting *low* prices adversely affect oil producing regions (Texas, for example) and encourage dangerously increased reliance on foreign oil. Put slightly differently, the crisis created by a supply *shortfall* is that the world's resources will not be able to keep up with American and world energy appetites; the crisis created by the supply *glut* is that low-cost foreign producers will eventually raise prices or use our dependence on them to force us to accept policies not in our national interest. Either "crisis" will satisfy energy planners, ever eager to find a problem for their particular solution.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to building an energy policy on subsidies, rationing, and other direct government controls—controls that have created a series of shortages and gluts. The alternative is an energy policy rooted in one basic principle: get the prices right. This can be accomplished by a combination of regulatory reform, removal of impediments to competition, and making energy users pay the full costs they impose on society.

Regulatory reform is already underway. Ronald Reagan's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), led by its innovative and tenacious chairman (she eschews "chairperson"), Martha Hesse, has forced open gas markets by pressuring pipelines to move supplies of all producers on equal terms. And she has encouraged state regulators to adopt bidding programs for electricity supplies: local utilities must now seek competitive bids from small and large companies that want to meet consumers' growing need for electricity.

But several impediments to competition remain. Electric utilities are still inclined to prevent potential competitors from using their transmission lines. Railroads still refuse to let pipelines, which can move coal in the form of a slurry, cross their rights-of-way providing an alternative to rail shipment. These barriers to the free movement of energy in all its forms, and to free customer choice of suppliers, should be eliminated.

To regulatory reform and increased competition must be added two additional ingredients. The first is information. Consumers of energy need to know what different appliances cost to operate. Proper labeling permits them to decide whether a more efficient (and, inevitably, more expensive) refrigerator suits them better than a cheaper model. Given good information and proper price signals, customers can be left free to decide for themselves just how much energy to use, and in what form. They wouldn't need Washington planners to set "standards" for cars or appliances.

The second ingredient of any sensible energy policy is to make sure that consumers pay the full cost of the energy they use. This is no simple matter, since prices often fail to reflect all the costs energy users impose on society. Oil consumers, for example, impose hidden costs on us all—the costs of defending supply routes and the costs of supply interruptions being the most obvious: an oil tariff is clearly needed. Consumers of electricity are imposing air pollution and other environmental costs on society: pollution taxes are called for. Consumers of conservation devices are, in some cases, imposing costs on energy consumers by insisting on government-financed research and special tax treatment: a sensible energy policy would eliminate these distortions.

The beauty of an energy policy based on regulatory reform, competition, good consumer information, and proper pricing is that it would not require elaborate forecasts of demand, forecasts which are more rather than less likely to prove wrong; it would not require the government to "pick winners"—to guess which technology is likely to provide an efficient supply of energy; it would not require imposing on consumers any specific mixture of use and abstinence; and it would not require massive subsidies.

If he ignores the special pleaders, our new President can put America's energy economy in order. The perfect policy, of course, is unattainable. But if we set out in the right direction, we at least have some chance of arriving at our desired destination: an energy economy in which resources are used efficiently, consumers have wide choice, able managers can earn reasonable returns for their investors—and energy planners can stay in their universities, law firms, and consulting practices where they can inflict harm only on students and clients. □

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ECONOMIC BOOM BOXERS

by Melville J. Ulmer

The perpetually burning question of what lies in store for the economy—prosperity or recession—flares with particular brilliance in election years, for obvious reasons. It also provokes an avalanche of responses from scholars, professional crystal gazers, necromancers, and the more determined partisans of the two major political parties. That liberals are currently the most pessimistic—considering the level of business activity, that is—is simply further proof that hope springs eternal. In a sense the situation is gratifying, since it is so easy to find an authority, no matter what the credentials, whose opinion will confirm one's own.

Unfortunately, the question of what credentials are appropriate for passably accurate forecasting must remain one of the unsolved mysteries. Even a prognosticator's impressive record of past successes, experience suggests, can promise no more for the next venture than a crapshooter's string of three consecutive sevens. In 1929 America's top economist, Irving Fisher, foresaw a surge in the nation's production, income, and the stock market no less, just weeks before the crash.

Although economic knowledge has grown some, there is as yet no evidence that it has penetrated the "art" of forecasting or that it ever will. Fisher's notable error has been replicated regularly ever since, although (given more modest opportunities) not so theatrically. Even in flamboyance it was at least approached fifty-three years later by the equally renowned George Stigler, winner of the 1982 Nobel Prize in economics. After thanking the President for his congratulations at the White House threshold, he turned to reporters to proclaim a great depression on the brink of what proved to be the longest business expansion in history. Hence I cringe when, at the turn of every year, daily newspapers ask economists versed in prophecy what the next twelve months will bring. They might as well ask Jimmy the Greek or the nearest bartender.

History as well as verifiable theory bear that statement out. True enough, philosophers hold that the proof of knowledge lies in prediction, but they do not say in soothsaying, and there's a big difference. The distinction is between *conditional* anticipations, such as confirmed in science laboratories, and flat-out unqualified divinations, which may or may not materialize. Economists serve legitimately in the first capacity when they tell us what will happen if a specified event occurs, such as a rise in interest rates, *provided* all other potential stimuli remain unchanged. They are generally good at that. They inevitably flounder when they assert, unreservedly, what will happen next year.

Meanwhile, citizens throughout the nation may tingle in anxiety to glimpse beyond the economic horizon, whether out of public spirit, political hopes, or concern for the fortunes they may gain or lose. The temptation grows strong to accept presumably expert presentiments, including those of the politically biased, especially when proffered in apparent good faith and free of charge. They may even develop their own "feelings" about the future, opting for a rise, a fall, or a placid continuation of the present. Such independence is commendable. But be assured that the feelings, your own or anyone else's, assuming they are reasonably reflective and informed, are as apt to be unerring as those of the world's most renowned fatidical specialist, no less but no more—which is to say that on the average they most likely will be worth nothing at all.

There are solid reasons for this futility. A half-century ago one of history's greatest students of economic dynamics, Wesley Clair Mitchell, demonstrated that the turning points of business fluctuations are *inherently* unpredictable. To be sure, his personal interest was not in debunking the business forecasters who, when he began his work, would have been casually ranked with hapless clairvoyants or unblushing charlatans anyway. His lifetime objective (which, professionally, spanned the years from 1900 to 1948) was to probe the nature of cyclical swings so that, once underway, society could move intelligently toward their moderation. His basic theory has become so thoroughly absorbed in modern thinking that it is taken for granted, like gravity or the apparent movements of the sun. But the one particular lesson drawn from his work of prime interest here has been forgotten, in some instances willfully, by many

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Melville J. Ulmer is emeritus professor of economics at the University of Maryland, a one-time student of Wesley Mitchell, and an associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

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Curtis Cate, Editor

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though certainly not all economists and business analysts.

In perhaps the most meticulously documented study on record, [1] Mitchell found that a free market economy moves naturally in wave-like patterns that, though broadly similar, differ in significant details. None of the cycles' separate phases—defined as recovery, expansion, recession, and contraction—is heralded by unmistakable portents. Such heterogeneity among business cycles, he wrote, is insured by what he called "exogenous" intrusions—the pepper of technological changes, droughts, monopolistic forays, strikes, wars, fortuitous over-production, drastic institutional changes, bank failures, speculative fevers, critical political policies or legislative decisions. And these may appear anywhere in the world and, in a tightly knit international society, affect all the rest of us. In particular, they swerve, swing, stall, clobber, and stimulate business activity in habitually unforeseeable ways.

By every possible measure, business cycles display the bewildering diversity of their individual characteristics. Thus on the *average* they last about three and a half years, measured from peak to peak, but their expansionary phases have varied from a brief nine-month postwar splurge in 1919 to a stretch of at least five years—the duration thus far of the present record-breaking prosperity. Business contractions have ranged from just six months in 1980 to the four terrible years from 1929 to 1933, or to almost ten years if we take the entire 1930s as one extended depression, as many do. It is clear there is no ineradicable law governing the timing. The present upturn is already approaching twice the average length of an entire business cycle, and who's to say it won't make it? I would agree that it seems unlikely but wouldn't bet a junk bond either for or against.

Aside from their duration, business cycles also differ widely in vigor, varying weak and hesitant recoveries with blazing upturns, withering plateaus with steamy booms, gentle declinations with tobogganing drops and devastating depressions. They differ qualitatively in a mirror image of the immense variety of the exogenous factors sporadically at work. In addition, irrational psychological reactions, cultural fidelities, and ephemeral fashions distort the simplified pecuniary calculus often assumed (by neoclassical economists) to dominate the market. In sum, by the nature of the phenomena there can be no infallible signs or even highly reliable indicators of coming turning points from prosperity to recession or back again from recession to prosperity. The record of professional forecasters is a thoroughly predictable result.

That record, insofar as it has been compiled, is almost ridiculously lamentable. The first to notice this was the famous financial writer J. A. Livingston, in an article in 1953 entitled "How Wrong Can Economists Be?" This piece was inspired by the nightmares of a post-World War II depression which were widely circulated as that conflict neared its end. They were drawn, most notably, by the pens of Robert R. Nathan, then deputy director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, and Lawrence R. Klein, later a Nobel laureate. They predicted 8 to 15 million unemployed as the nation's resources were shifted cumbersomely from wartime uses to peace. The end of the war, instead, brought immediate and unprecedented prosperity. Livingston subsequently recorded a systematic poll of leading forecasters annually from the war's end through the early 1970s, with as many as fifty respondents. He found that, in deciding whether next year's real gross national product would go up or down, the consensus was correct just four out of twelve times. That was less than the result one might expect from tossing a coin.

Since those days aspiring seers have performed no better, at least not in their critical mission of spotting turning points. According to the account of economics writer Warren Brookes, the consensus of leading forecasters queried by the press missed the "worst recession in forty years," the one of 1974-75; then they wrongly predicted recessions in 1978 and 1979; failed to foresee the major one that arrived in 1982, and finally underestimated the vigor of the 1983-84 expansion by more than 50 percent. So far as I know, there were none prepared to predict that the last "recovery" would persist to the present writing.

Nor should credence be given to miraculous statistical devices designed to yield "objective" insights into the future that elude biased and otherwise limited human beings. The federal government's monthly index of twelve leading indicators is sometimes so heralded, but in performance it has been wrong or seriously misleading more often than right, just like us humans. It remains a useful early indicator of what seems to be happening *now*, predating release of the comprehensive GNP by three months or a bit more. Otherwise, it provides just another brick in the wall of truth supporting economic adviser Arthur F. Burns's statement to newly elected President Eisenhower in 1953: "Economists have not yet evolved, if they ever will, a technique for developing dependable forecasts."

The lesson of this record for individuals, households, and government leaders is crystal clear. It is the kind of thing that dying fathers, in their traditional wisdom, would tell their children if they lived long enough to say it: Be prepared as best you can for all conceivable eventualities; hedge every bet you are compelled to make on the future.

For household investors that means diversifying liquid assets as much as possible among stocks, bonds, cash, C.D.'s, mutual funds, and money funds; and in stocks among industries and individual corporations. If that seems like mere common sense, it even so implies a fortitude, beyond the historical average, to resist the silken tongues of brokers and other salesmen. A compilation earlier this year by the *Wall Street Journal* showed that the most widely (and successfully) touted stocks of the nation's ten leading brokers *under*performed the market during the previous year and a half in eight out of ten cases.

For government leaders the lesson of experience is to modify their traditional inclinations and exchange some bravado for larger measures of modesty. The prime reason is that modesty promotes a profound reluctance to act, an essential counterweight to the public pressures usually prevailing. Effervescent media pundits, with appropriate forecasts at hand, call constantly for quick fixes to remedy the often irremediable—to maintain prosperity or to regain it, to lower prices for consumers or raise them for farmers, to cut the deficit or support free childcare, to make the rich poor or the poor rich, and so on. Trying to follow such advice could be upsetting. Yet as history has shown, a free market system reacts to a hyperactive government the way human organisms react to carbon monoxide. It is easy to imagine, too, the lot of individual freedoms in an environment created by zealots. Therefore wise public leaders would keep fiscal and monetary powder dry but for real and present emergencies only. And they would be correspondingly abstemious in exercising other government prerogatives. □

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[1] The study appeared in a series of monographs beginning in 1903, the best known of which are *Business Cycles: The Problem and Its Setting*, 1927, and *Measuring Business Cycles* (with A. F. Burns), 1946. Mitchell founded the famed National Bureau of Economic Research to carry on his work, which it still does.

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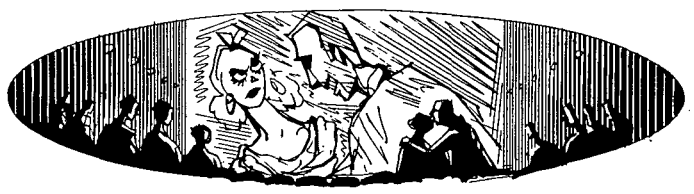


STREETS OF NEW YORK

by Bruce Bawer

One of the more dire recent developments in American pop culture has been the glorification of the stand-up comedian. Comedy clubs and "Comedy Relief"-type benefits have proliferated; films of comedy routines by Bill Cosby and Eddie Murphy have been released theatrically and reviewed as if they were actual movies; yesterday's stand-up comics become today's movie stars. In the eighties, stand-up comics put on airs: the *Playbill* for comedienne Sandra Bernhardt's recent one-woman show in New York referred to her as a "rock-and-roll performance artist." Wasn't it Thucydides who observed that a society enters upon an inexorable process of decline once it begins to take stand-up comedy seriously?

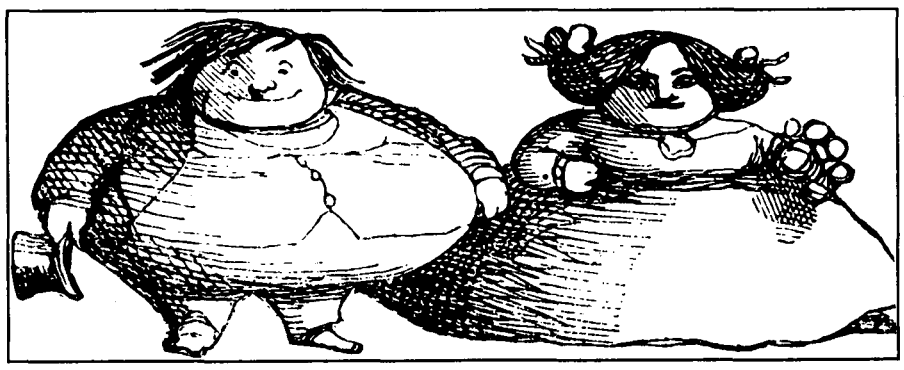
All this is by way of getting around to *Punchline*, which was written and directed by David Seltzer, and which is just as awful as it looks in the ads. Tom Hanks plays Steve Gold, an aspiring stand-up comic who works regularly at an obscure New York club called the Gas Station. Steve is also a med student, but not for long; in the opening sequence, he's kicked out for failing a junior-high-school-level oral exam in anatomy. But hey, he wasn't made to be a doctor, like his dad and brother—he was made to be *funny*. Instead of identifying parts of the large intestine, he entertains his examiners with "poop-chute" jokes. Hilarious.

Also appearing regularly at the Gas Station is a New Jersey housewife named Lila Krytsick (Sally Field). Lila's not as good as Steve—or so, at least, we're supposed to understand. His comedy, you see, comes from his *guts*: hers comes from a list of gags. Indeed, she gets in hot water with her hubby (John Goodman) by spending the family vacation money on Polish jokes. Hubby doesn't understand why she's wasting her evenings at this seedy comedy club for $15 a night. She tries to explain: "I love being a mom. I love being a wife. And I love being able to make people laugh." Her tone is solemn, subdued: Mozart was never this serious about his art.

And seriousness is very much the point here. "Is everything a joke to you?" Steve's prof demands. Later, Lila asks the same thing. Steve's reply: "Lady, nothing's a joke to me. That's why I do stand-up comedy—and *that's why you don't.*" (This is Seltzer's idea of a profound line; it's supposed to Make Us Think.) Seared by this insight, Lila begs Steve for pointers; he complies. For he believes she's naturally funny—and while he'll lie to a woman about a lot of things, he wouldn't lie about that sacred subject: "I don't mess around with *funny*." All Lila needs, he insists, are "the right gags." He instructs her to draw upon her own life: "All our lives are funny. We're God's animated cartoons." Apparently, we're supposed to look upon this as brilliant advice; certainly Lila seems never to have heard it before.

So Lila starts telling jokes about her family and becomes a socko comedienne—easy as that. (Except that she doesn't *really* tell jokes about her family: the supposedly good and original material she does at the end of the movie is in fact as bad and contrived as the stuff she does at the beginning.) Meanwhile, Steve's hitting the skids: the same emotional distress that makes him a great stand-up comic threatens to destroy him, *verstehen*? When a TV talent scout expresses interest, Steve says, "If you're sending someone down you'd better send him fast, because funny Steve is goin' down." When a second round of scouts appears, Steve cracks up on stage, collapsing in tears after choking out a gloppy psychiatrist's-couch monologue about his med-school failure, his macho dad's love of deer hunting, and his own fear of the sight of blood. It's a very weird scene, bathetic and overplayed and unconvincingly motivated; instead of feeling sympathy for Steve, we feel embarrassed for the scriptwriter.

Predictably, the film winds up with Lila and Steve facing off in a comedy contest. The audience (at the Gas Station, not in the movie theater) laughs itself crazy; their fellow comics tell Lila and Steve that they're "brilliant." We're plainly supposed to think so, too. But the comedy routines are as lame as the plot. It's amazing that somebody could make a big-budget film about stand-up comedy and not manage to get any fresh, funny material. Throughout the movie, the jokes are standard eighties stand-up fare: formula gags about genitals and breasts and vibrators, pointless references to baby-boomer pop-culture icons (e.g., "Gilligan's Island"), faux-confessional stuff about the comic's sexless marriage or crummy dates or screwy folks. Even Hanks's best lines, in his climactic routine, sound familiar; and his every gesture and inflection is a stand-up cliché. Like the worst sort of comedian, director Seltzer seems to think that anything will get a laugh if you give it a glib, snappy delivery. Seltzer's own script and direction, to be sure, are anything but snappy; the film is half an hour longer than it should be, and is full of slack, dramatically unfocused sequences.



What's most irritating of all about *Punchline*, however, is its governing pretense—or delusion—that the slick recitation of a set of canned jokes constitutes a serious form of self-expression, if not art. We're supposed to buy the idea that Lila "finds herself" through *schtick*, that Steve is a tormented genius—Nijinsky as stand-up comic. We're supposed to identify with the feelings of the talent scout when she watches Steve's act with a reverential awe, as if he's Joan Sutherland or Caruso. What could be more grotesque? Watching this film, it's hard to believe that once upon a time Hollywood movies customarily made heroes of people like Zola, Chopin, and Michelangelo; most of the films themselves were far from art, but at least they honored art and recognized it as a moral force, as something in which truth and beauty inhered, as a separate and serious entity. The only thing that a characteristic eighties writer-director like David Seltzer seems to take seriously, by contrast, is showbiz itself.

Back in 1974, the director Joan Micklin Silver gave us a movie called *Hester Street*, in which a young Jewish immigrant woman—played by Carol Kane—made a life for herself on the Lower East Side of early twentieth-century Manhattan. Now Silver has moved ahead a few generations and up a few blocks, has found herself another small, delicately pretty actress with frizzy hair, and has come up with *Crossing Delancey*, an extremely charming contemporary romantic drama starring Amy Irving.

Written by Susan Sandler (who based the script on her play of the same title), the film is about Isabelle Grossman, a single young Jewish woman who lives on the West Side of Manhattan and works in "New York's last real bookstore," New Day Books. Isabelle loves her job, loves the readings and book parties and literary soirées that go with it, loves meeting the famous writers who show up in the store from

Bruce Bawer, TAS's regular movie critic, is the author of Diminishing Fictions *(Graywolf Press).*

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time to time. She has a particular fondness for Anton Maes (Jeroen Krabbe), a celebrated Dutch novelist who lives in the neighborhood and whose latest novel she has kept in the window of the bookstore for several weeks. ("What I like most about your writing," she tells the suave, hunky Anton, "is its deceptive accessibility.") She is, in short, the very model of a sophisticated and modern young urbanite, a cosmopolitan girl for whose life-style Helen Gurley Brown herself would be proud to take the credit.

But her old Jewish grandmother—her "Bubby," to use the movie's Yiddishism—isn't having any of it. Bubby (Reizl Bozyk), who lives in a gloomy Lower East Side high-rise, feels that Isabelle's life is empty and meaningless without a husband: "No matter how much money you got, if you're alone, you're sick." Consequently she engages the services of Hannah (wittily played by Sylvia Miles), a loud, vulgar old matchmaker right out of *Fiddler on the Roof*. In Bubby's kitchen, Hannah introduces Isabelle to Sam Posner (Peter Riegert), an unprepossessing young man who lives in the old neighborhood, goes to *shul* every day, and runs a pickle stand on Delancey Street. Isabelle finds the matchmaking process embarrassing and prehistoric, and finds the pickle merchant himself totally unsuitable. "I live uptown," she tells him patronizingly. "A million miles from here." She's in love with a famous Dutch novelist, for heaven's sake.

But the stolid, no-nonsense pickle man doesn't disappear from her life. He's attracted to her, and she gradually finds herself being attracted to him. It's the oldest story in the world, of course—the young woman coming to recognize the superior worth of the less glamorous but more truly substantial of two men. Audrey Hepburn went the same route in *Sabrina*, Katharine Hepburn in *The Philadelphia Story*, Jean Simmons in *Desiree*, and so forth. With this sort of movie, one invariably has the conclusion figured out pretty early on; the pleasure comes from watching the heroine reverse herself. And in *Crossing Delancey*, I'm happy to say, Isabelle's reversal is managed with remarkable finesse and charm. It is the ultimate measure of the success of this film, in fact, that the match with Sam seems, in the early scenes, like the height of absurdity, and by the end seems wonderfully right. You start out thinking, *God no, they're not going to try to convince us that this vibrant, happy, literate girl should marry this fellow?*—and by the end, to your considerable surprise, you *are* convinced.

There are, as it happens, a lot of wonderfully right things about this movie. To begin with, Amy Irving's performance is luminous and endearing. She captures Isabelle's confusion—her sense of being caught between two worlds—with marvelous naturalness; for all her little lies and self-deceptions, one never feels less than utter sympathy for her. Also notable are the modest but deeply poignant images of the loneliness of a single woman's life in New York: grabbing dinner with girlfriends at a corner hot dog stand, jawing over coffee in a diner, haunting the take-out salad bar at the Korean delicatessen after work. I've complained previously about how few films manage to capture the feel of life in Manhattan; this one does so, with astonishing sensitivity and without making a fuss about it. Likewise, while American films tend to be notoriously bad at capturing the way literary people look and talk and behave, this one does a pretty good job of it.

To be sure, not everything about *Crossing Delancey* is perfect. In seeking to create a decidedly traditional young Jewish man, Sandler has imagined someone who, if his kind actually existed, would have to be the least successful Jewish guy in New York. (An intelligent, articulate young Jewish CUNY graduate selling pickles out of barrels on Delancey Street? Tell me another.) Peter Riegert's Sam, moreover, is so down-to-earth and secure about his identity that he sometimes comes across as downright smug and self-satisfied. And Sandler gives him at least one line of dialogue—"What's wrong with my world? You think it's so small? You think it defines me?"—that should have gone unspoken; it makes Sam sound less like a Lower East Side pickle merchant than, well, a Dutch novelist.

As for the Dutch novelist, one gets the feeling that Sandler made him Dutch because the Netherlands is right next to Germany and because "Dutch" sounds like "Deutsch" and because when we see Isabelle mooning over this big, strapping fellow we're supposed to feel, deep down: What's this nice Jewish girl doing falling for this *Nazi*? Finally, while the musical score is mostly quite serviceable, there are times when the fast, loud, and aggressively rhythmic numbers supplied by the Roches (a group of girl singers) seem just a bit too distracting. On the whole, however, *Crossing Delancey* is a delightful film—fresh and affecting and lovely. □

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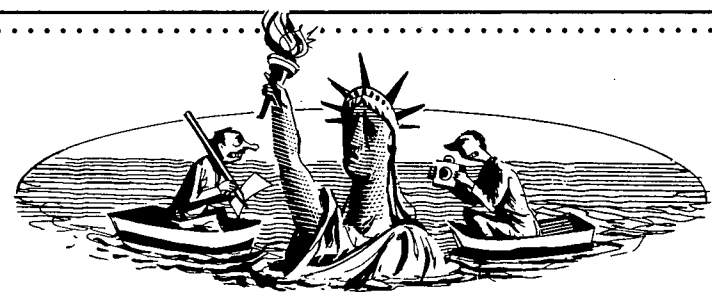

SCREAMERS

by Michael Ledeen

In early September, we learned from the perestroika news service that Soviet maps have been systematically falsified since the days of the revolution. And while the Soviets made the announcement, it was immediately evident that this had been no secret in the Western world. Everyone in sight had a profound comment to make. The State Department Geographer (a position I hadn't known existed, and one which certainly warrants a profile in one of our leading publications), a previously unknown gentleman named Demko, told us that the Soviet policy was "symptomatic of the paranoia found throughout the Soviet Union before glasnost." A British professor wittily remarked that "the best street map of Moscow was produced fifteen years ago by the Central Intelligence Agency," and went on to murmur, "Thank God, they have actually come out and admitted their distortions."

The answer to my question of last month—Why had we not heard about this before?—has now been partially answered by the *New York Times*'s man of the hour, Robert Pear, who interviewed the State Department's Demko and discovered that we had, in fact, heard about it before, back in 1970 in a magazine called the *Military Engineer*. The article sounds very much like it came from the darkness of spookdom:

> The author of the article, who was not identified, said strategically important cities had been shifted in random directions on Soviet maps. In addition, he said, "hundreds of insignificant features, such as remote tribal villages in Siberia, small streams and trails were purposely displaced."

But why, we are entitled to ask again, didn't we, the reading public, hear about this before? After all, travelers to Moscow were certainly aware that the Soviet street maps were wrong, and the hundreds of American journalists in the Soviet Union since the revolution

Michael Ledeen is the author of the new book, Perilous Statecraft: An Insider's Account of the Iran-Contra Affair *(Charles Scribner's Sons).*

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had to have discovered that there were cities on those blank spaces on Soviet maps, and that the locations of other cities were misplaced.

I suspect that one of the prime reasons was fear of expulsion. Just as our correspondents in China during the Cultural Revolution never told us about the full horror of that period, knowing that if they did they would depart the People's Republic, so our men and women in the USSR undoubtedly realized that this particular story would send them to the nearest airport.

But the editors had to have been in on the suppression as well, for the story could have been written out of Washington (or, for that matter, any academic center of Soviet studies). The story did not appear until the Soviets put it out themselves. "All the news that's fit to print" indeed.

The Great Ethiopian Coverup

Kudos to Robert D. Kaplan and to the *Washington Monthly* for a first-class piece of research and writing, "The African Killing Fields" (September). Here is the essence of it:

> What communists were doing in Ethiopia was far more horrible than what communists were doing in Angola or Nicaragua. But while other administration officials frequently criticized the regime in the strongest possible terms, President Reagan himself was practically silent.
>
> A communist regime brutally uprooted its own citizens against their will, forcibly separating hundreds of thousands from their families and killing tens of thousands through deliberate mistreatment. But the impact of this cataclysm on the media, a conservative White House, and the American public was minimal.

Right he is, and there is even more: as I noted last July, not only did the Communist regime of Ethiopia systematically murder its citizens through starvation, but at the very same time the youth and the idealists of the Western world were being gulled into thinking they were helping out through showbiz fundraisers like "Live Aid." This massive exercise in self-deception and bad music awaits its historian.

The Latest Lies

On October 5, the *Washington Post*'s dynamic duo, Bob Woodward and Walter Pincus (presented in "star" rather than alphabetical order), presented the usual mix of government secrets, unnamed sources, and innuendo to damage the administration. The headline was a screamer: "CIA Given Free Hand In 1984-85; Reagan Authorization To Counter Terrorists Called 'License to Kill.' " The story was rather more convoluted, trotting out bits and pieces of alleged presidential "findings" that authorized CIA action against terrorist groups overseas. And seven paragraphs down we are told that "as far as could be determined, no one was killed as a result of the intelligence findings Reagan signed."

So if there is disagreement about both the intention and the results of the findings, why all the noise? The answer lies in paragraph nine: "White House officials have said that Vice President Bush would have been given a copy of or access to the finding."

In fact, the CIA never received authorization to kill anyone. While there were some people here and there in the bureaucracy who thought we ought to go after individual terrorists, the professionals at CIA violently opposed any such suggestion. They insisted that if terrorists were indeed going to be targeted, the President had to rescind the anti-assassination executive order that has been on the books since the days of President Ford. The various documents—pieces of which were evidently wafted under the noses of the *Post* reporters—indicated this bureaucratic struggle, which was resolved by leaving the executive order intact but still encouraging more vigorous action against terrorism. Not much of a story in the end, and it died with suitable speed.

A far more energetic bit of mythmaking was launched by some disgruntled Democratic staffers from the House Iran-contra committee in early October. Led by Spencer Oliver, an aide to Florida Congressman Dante Fascell, the staff issued a supplementary document pretending to prove the existence of a CIA plot to conduct a secret propaganda campaign on behalf of the contras from within other agencies of the executive branch (notably the NSC, the State Department, and USIA).

Throughout the Iran-contra investigations and hearings, Oliver was peddling the line that Oliver North was simply the tip of an iceberg that rested on the CIA and William Casey. Oliver drove one of the nastiest elements in the investigation in which, as the Minority Report of the Joint Committee observed, "Committee attorneys questioned witnesses about their political activity, religious affiliations, educational backgrounds, employment history, political lineage, roommate's political contributions, social associations, and more."

Oliver subscribed to a version of the now-discredited Christic Institute view of the world, according to which the CIA (or, alternatively, a secret group of former CIA and Pentagon officials) was responsible for almost all of the presumed wrongdoing in the world since the 1960s, including drug-running, assassinations, and subversion of progressive governments. Oliver tried to get this nutty view of recent history included in the final report of the Joint Committee, but Senate Counsel Arthur Liman, to his credit, rejected Oliver's attempt. Liman told his House counterpart, John Nields, that if the House committee insisted on including the nonsense in their report, the Senate would issue its own version. Faced with this ultimatum, the House committee eliminated most of Oliver's wilder fantasies from its document.

But Oliver does not give up easily, and he has devoted the past year to stigmatizing those persons who went all-out for the contras in the years preceding the scandal. The latest products of this active political campaign are to be found in the fall issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine in an article by Robert Parry of *Newsweek* and Peter Kornbluh of the far-left Institute for Policy Studies, and in an October 4 front-page article in the *Boston Globe* by Ross Gelbspan. The lead paragraph of the *Globe* piece tells it all:

> A wide-ranging domestic propaganda and disinformation campaign, designed to win public support for administration policies in Central America and elsewhere, was conceived by the late director of the Central Intelligence Agency and implemented by a veteran CIA propaganda specialist . . .

The claim is nonsense. Beneath all of the pseudo-conspiracy *claims*, there lies a single fact: the Reagan Administration, largely through the leadership of William Clark (at the time the national security adviser to the President), concluded that the professional bureaucracy was incompetent to conduct an effective public campaign in behalf of the President's policies, and appointed more energetic people to lead the campaign. This was done in the State Department under the leadership of Ambassador Otto Reich and in the NSC under Walter Raymond, a long-time CIA professional who left the Agency to devote his energies to generating support for administration policies regarding Central America and Afghanistan. People like Oliver, Parry, and Kornbluh didn't like the effectiveness of the Reichs and the Raymonds, and have attempted to

(continued on page 53)

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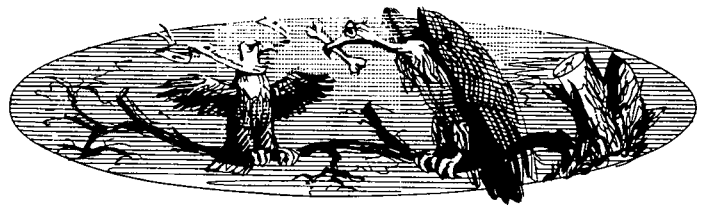

DISNEY'S CINDERELLA STORY

by Benjamin J. Stein

Marla Bane of Fort Lee, New Jersey, writes, "Mr. Stein, you always write so negatively about businessmen. Do you hate all businessmen or capitalism or what?"

The answer, of course, is "or what." And in thinking of a more detailed answer, I could not help but recall one of the best social analyses ever written, a company called Walt Disney, and a few other odds and ends which come under the general heading of Zen and the Art of Modern Management.

In the 1860s, a little-known crank journalist named Karl Marx wrote an essay entitled "Political Developments in France in 1848 and 1849." This essay analyzed the reign of Louis Philippe and said a few hauntingly familiar things.

The era of Louis Philippe, said the young Marx, was characterized by a national mania for making money. This national mania for gold did not reflect any wish to add further to the capital structure or productive capacity of France, said Marx. Rather, the obsession was with "pocketing already existing pools of wealth." Thus, financing deals which seemed to be adding wealth, but were really just adding debt or simply shuffling paper, became the rage of 1848 and 1849. Every effort of government, the press, and the entire culture, as Marx said, was directed toward legitimizing and even sanctifying that effort.

And, in fact, said Marx, the government of Louis Philippe was no more than the political arm of the great houses of capital and finance. But, said Marx, if you closely examined who the great men of finance capital were in that day and age, you would find that they were no more or less than the *lumpenproletariat* turned upside down, rising from the bottom of society to the top, by means of using basic tricks of theft on a grand scale in finance capital.

Now, if any of that reminds you of certain famous names in finance today, that is just my intention. The problem with American capitalism today, as I humbly see it, is that too much—though far from all—of the power and expertise of modern management is used not to create any new wealth or productive factors, but to pocket wealth that already exists—and belongs to someone else.

In that sad category one must put management leveraged buyouts (LBOs), in which an arbitrage between stock price and asset value is observed and then simply pocketed by management with the aid of powerful law firms, investment banks, and the biggest shill in the whole game, the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Also in that category would come "restructurings," which simply make stockholders liable for money borrowed and then paid to bribe them not to sell to a raider, "greenmail," in which management bribes raiders to stay away with money belonging to stockholders, and certain forms of "spinoffs," which are in fact a predecessor to almost certain management looting of the spun-off companies.

When managements act in this way, they are—it seems to me—in direct conflict with their most basic obligations to their stockholders. When that conflict exists, the basic force animating capitalism is attacked in that a crucial link is broken: the link between investors and profit. If the profit that rightly belongs to investors is simply attached by management and taken away from investors, eventually investors will (one hopes) get wise, and start to refuse to invest. Thus, capital, the basic ingredient in capitalism, dries up, and with it, capitalism.

But, and this is a big but, fighting this dispiriting trend is another form of management, which is in basic harmony with its stockholders, with the needs and hopes of investors, and with the best of the spirit of capitalism—and which would confound and disappoint Karl Marx. There is hardly any better example of this kind of management in Zen harmony with its stockholders than a company which I can see literally out of my office window (when there is no smog), called Walt Disney.

In the early 1980s, the Disney Company was, in the words of my former boss, "a pitiful helpless giant." It ran extremely successful theme parks in Florida and California. But the earnings from those parks, while large, were fairly flat. The movie arm of Disney was a Hollywood joke: "Walt Disney Company—we make movies for people who don't want to wait in line." Disney turned out only a few live-action movies each year, and hardly ranked as one of the major studios any longer. In addition, Disney merchandising, while successful, was on a modest scale.

The company had been the subject of raids, rumors of breakups, and greenmail paid to certain roly-poly characters in the world of "finance." In the midst of crisis, the Disney directors, apparently led by Roy Disney, brought on board a whole new management team in September 1984. Leading the team was Michael Eisner, a mere child of forty-three at the time, and Frank Wells. Eisner had been president of Paramount Pictures Corporation, then the leading studio, and Wells had been a high official of Warner Brothers, vice chairman to be specific, and was famous for climbing mountains. They were sworn in on a Friday and started to work on Saturday.

In short order, Eisner and Wells assembled a powerful cast of characters to re-animate the great house of Disney. They brought in Jeffrey Katzenberg, former head of production of features at Paramount, to run the studio part of Disney; Rich Frank, former head of Paramount TV, to run Disney's TV side; David Hoberman, one of the most successful young agents in the history of Hollywood; Ricardo Mestres, a hot production vice-president at Paramount; Marty Kaplan, former chief speechwriter for Walter Mondale; Gary Wilson, a former exec at Marriott, and other players.

These people immediately established a work routine which resembled Parris Island, South Carolina's schedule. Top executives were expected to be in their offices by seven, to work Saturdays and Sundays, and to take work home. Hollywood generally runs at a far more hectic pace than outsiders imagine, but the stamina required at Disney would have broken all but the most determined managers.

As one might say, the Eisner-Wells team at Disney worked as hard as managers do when they have just taken their companies private—only Disney was still owned by its stockholders. Eisner and Wells had extremely substantial stock options, but they were not by any means proprietors of the firm they ran. The great mass of any benefit they obtained would flow to the shareholders.

In short order, Disney discovered several things: First of all, they found they were owners of a genuinely unique, monopoly necessity of American life—the characters who had been created by the old prewar and 1950s Disney Company. There were no substitutes for Mickey and Minnie, Goofy and Donald Duck. Moreover, Americans had become addicted to those characters, as well as to Mary Poppins and Snow White and her dwarfs.

The demand for these characters and the rides they hosted was so powerful that their demand curve was almost flat. That is, as Eisner and company raised prices for the theme parks, attendance did not fall at all. In fact, the demand curve might even have defied marginality theory by being upward sloping, so that more of the Disney entourage was demanded as the price of it rose. Further, since the Disney characters were so powerfully ingrained in the American imagination, Eisner and his pals discovered that they could merchandise them far beyond what anyone had previously imagined.

The results were nothing short of phenomenal. Revenue from the theme parks rose by about 80 percent between 1984 and 1987. Operating income al-

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Benjamin J. Stein is a writer and producer living in Hollywood, California.

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most tripled in the same period. For consumer products, from 1983 to 1987, revenues increased by about 50 percent, while operating income increased by about 70 percent for the new management.

Revenues for these segments rose, but income rose much faster. This had something to do with the phenomenal stinginess of Disney management with the stockholders' money.

But the most staggering success was in Jeffrey Katzenberg's filmed entertainment division. Its annual output of live action films just about quintupled. Its gross revenues rose by more than a factor of five, from $165 million in 1983 to about $876 million in 1987. Its operating income went from a loss of $33 million in 1983 to a positive $130 million in 1987. This year its revenues will be off the charts, since it has had three consecutive blockbusters, a hitherto unknown phenomenon in studio history—*Three Men and a Baby, Good Morning Vietnam,* and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit.*

Disney also has a rapidly growing cable channel, a burgeoning hotel business, a theme park in Tokyo, and another to come in France. There are even rumors of a Disney park in Hungary.

Its cash on hand is about fifteen times what Disney had in 1983, and just the earnings from its cash management are now a substantial source of income. Overall, revenues have grown by a compounded annual rate of close to 25 percent since new management appeared, and net income has risen by a compound annual rate of almost 66 percent in that time. Shareholders' holdings have about quadrupled in value since Eisner and Wells took the helm.

In other words, this is a phenomenon. The management of Disney have used the monopoly power of their characters, and a combination of hard work, imagination, and innovation, to make Disney into by far the fastest-charging studio, and by far the most awesome recreation company in America.

Disney, which is in the field of image and imagination, has also been smart enough to realize that its *appearance* as a reborn giant with an unlimited future, especially its appearance to the investment community, can greatly add to stockholder value. It has a tireless corporate communications veep, Irwin Okun, who has helped Disney to become about the most widely covered company in America, if only favorable press is counted. (Coverage of Disney is so intense that one wonders if at some point Michael Eisner might actually become a Disney character himself.) The ink about Disney is so astonishingly profuse that it may well have an effect on the Disney p/e ratio, which makes every shareholder better off.

Disney has also introduced some fresh financing techniques as well. The company got its Japanese partners to put up, in yen (at a better yen-dollar ratio than today's), an amount equal to the forecast Disney stream of earnings from the Tokyo park for twenty years, discounted to present value, and then to pay that sum in cash yen, which it converted to dollars. This put about $700 million cash in Mickey's little pockets . . . and took a great big hunk of risk out of the future operation of the Tokyo park.

To put it mildly, Disney is hot.

But the point I am making is not just that it is hot. The point is that Disney managers, by hard work, or by meditation, or by chanting, or somehow, have achieved a kind of harmony with the satori of success so profound that almost everything they touch turns to gold. (Not everything, though: their success at network TV has been pretty much limited to "The Golden Girls." But I suspect they will not stop trying.)

If Disney managers are in Zen

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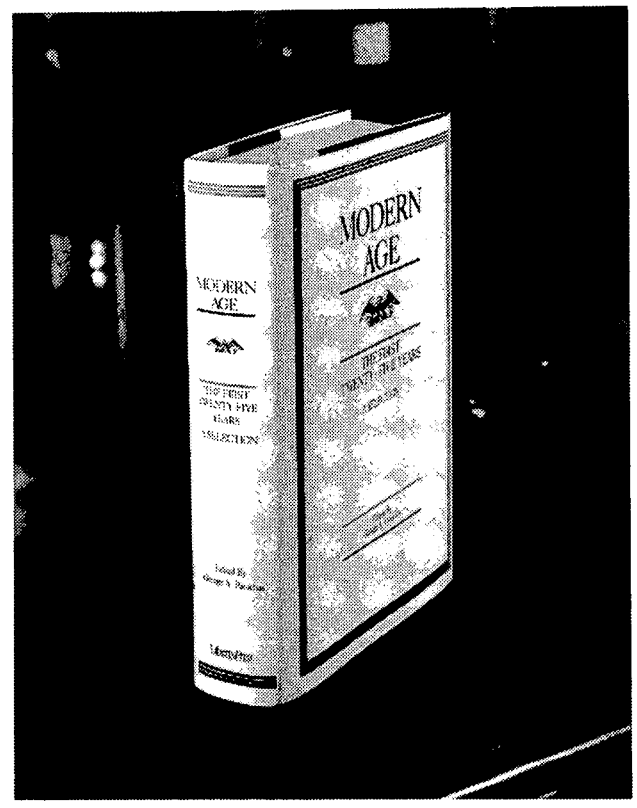

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synch with their audiences and attendees, they are in even greater synch with their stockholders, who have gotten rich, despite a stock market crash, off Michael and Mickey's efforts. The Zen bond between stockholder wishes and management wishes is truly profound. (If you need further proof, the number of Disney stockholders increased by almost two-thirds from 1983 to 1987, while the number of employees remained about constant.)

The point also is that Disney management could easily have come aboard, surveyed the incredible opportunities at Disney, the real estate, the monopoly value of the characters, and done what many another manager would have done: issue tearful reports about what bad shape the company is in, take huge discretionary charges, bitterly complain about quarter by quarter surveillance by securities analysts, and the need to "grow" the company at a pace secure from the turmoil of the market. They could have gotten a letter from an investment bank saying that $50 per share was a fair price for the dog ($12.50 adjusted for splits), and then taken the company private.

They could then have done what they did to make the company a huge success, and then taken it to the market again and realized an arbitrage of about $4 billion. They would have had to split it with a few equity partners, but overall, they would have done extremely well.

The fact that they did not simply take the company and run with it, but ran it for the good of the stockholders, is the real miracle of Disney. It confounds the Marxist explanation of how capitalism works, generates enthusiasm for free enterprise, and makes the whole economic system look less tawdry.

Now, I am by no means saying that Disney management is unique in working for the good of the shareholders. I am saying that their work has been so successful and so relatively altruistic that they appear on the margins of uniqueness along with people like David Packard and Thomas Murphy and Warren Buffett, and that all of these people are working to ensure the survival of capitalism, as compared with certain others I have written about who are interested in pocketing pools of already extant wealth that rightly belong to someone else.

In fact, the Disney management team is so close to uniqueness that maybe all of its top brass will appear at a capitalism theme park somewhere west of the Battery, and that they may well end up as permanent characters in the legend of the theme park that is simply called America. □

THE GREAT AMERICAN SALOON SERIES

PARADISE IN BROOKLYN

by Richard Brookhiser

I don't know the address of the Paradise, since I've only been driven there. A cab would cost too much, a subway would take too long, and I don't own a car. I only know the general location—Brooklyn, thithermost Brooklyn, half-way between Manhattan and Russia, somewhat closer to Russia.

The Paradise is an artifact of the seventies, when the masters of the Soviet Union were doling out Jews like pennies to the trick-or-treaters of détente. Some went to Israel, some came here. Many of the latter found their way to the Brighton Beach section of New York's largest borough. What they didn't find were places to eat and drink and dance to their liking. Hence the Paradise, and kindred night spots.

The last time I went—I've been three times in four years, which is about what you need to recover between visits—there was in our party a woman whose story I must tell here, or it will not get told. Lily too is a Russian Jew, born in Shanghai. When the red tide swept through China, her family made their last move, to Queens. First order of business was to find a Chinese laundry. Turned out the neighborhood spot was run by the same man who had done their laundry in Shanghai. Some people go to Ellis Island to contemplate the melting pot; I'll take the outer boroughs.

Though it sits on a gray seashore in a cold climate, the decor of the Paradise suggests Miami Beach: the sign in the street is blue, white, and pink neon, inside the colors run to rose. You can order just about anything to drink, on up to champagne (many tables do) but the drink of this house is vodka, which should be taken in the following way. Ask for an ice bucket, plunge the bottle in for half an hour, and knock it back by the glassful (not too many glasses full, or it will knock you back). The point is to send it straight down the tubes, bypassing the palate entirely, so that it tastes like a snowball made of hellfire. You'll hardly know you're damaging yourself.

But the main form of excess here is not drink, though it flows like the Dnestr, but food. The table when you

arrive is heaped—bread, fish, tongue, dumplings, mushrooms, shrimp (*glatt* it's not)—and those are just the appetizers. Once you've made a dent in these, they bring on the entrées (don't ask me what, I'd stopped caring). Is it good? Not particularly, but look, they don't stint.

When you're not drinking or eating, you dance. The last time I had come, I worried that the Paradise was becoming too Amerikanski. We scramble to find the best, then pout when others share our good taste. This time, it was gratifyingly echt. The Paradise is the last redoubt of the beehive hairdo. If you had the commission for eyeliner, you'd be rich. Men often come tieless, so as to show their golden chains and chest hair. When the music starts, be prepared to take a back seat. Many of the regulars, particularly those in middle or later years, look as if they have eaten here regularly. But they are as light-footed as nymphs and satyrs. Occasionally the turbulence subsides, and celebrating kinship groups range and rearrange themselves in complex permutations for photographers, while waiters tote enormous bouquets in and out of the picture. You needed a breather anyway.

Then the hilarity resumes. The quality of the music is variable. In another club, I've heard a pair of young chanteuses in mylar minidresses singing "Karma Chameleon," probably phonetically. This band was pretty good. It was mostly pop, mostly Russian. I caught one phrase, *Ach, Odessa!*, besides the lyrics of the theme song of the Paradise, which are done in English.

> When I'm with you, it's paradise
> No place on earth could be so nice.
> I kiss you once, you kiss me twice.
> That's how I know it's paradise.

"Bread and circuses" is a devil phrase we use for indulgences of the flesh, encouraged by tyrants to keep the masses servile. There is plenty of bread at the Paradise, but no circuses, which are mob stimulations: transient, collective, anonymous. Rather, it offers parties, or a collection of parties: celebrations of individuals, couples, families. I would not, say, in the idiotic words of the rock group, fight for the right to party. But to fight for the right to give a party is a coherent, and worthy, program. The end of good government, said Samuel Johnson, is to be happy at home—or, as that great roisterer knew, to be happy at your favorite night spot. The Paradise is an appropriate symbolic alternative to the worker's paradise so many of its patrons have escaped.

My wife and I left Lily there partying about three, and rolled home in the car of our friend the Turkish cabbie. □

Richard Brookhiser is a senior editor of National Review.

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TALKIN' MOSCOW BLUES

Josef Škvorecký/Lester & Orpyn Dennys (Toronto)
$17.95 (Canadian)

Rick Marin

Music has been enlisted in the service of many masters, and just as many scoundrels. This lesson of history Josef Škvorecký, the Czech émigré novelist and avid jazz aficionado, knows well. How easily the Nazis transposed the *Internazionale* into the *Hitlernazionale*. How quickly the Communists adapted their enemy's ten commandments against "so-called swing" and "Jewishly gloomy lyrics" (the so-called blues) once the war was over. How musicians find ways to defy anybody's rules. *Talkin' Moscow Blues*, Škvorecký's collection of essays and interviews from two decades in exile, promises "literature, politics, movies, and jazz." But eventually he always seems to come around to the last. This book is his chance to jam, in his acquired English or in translation from the Czech. His favorite theme: the fate of popular music, especially jazz, under the jackboot of German then Soviet tyranny. Škvorecký has seen both in his lifetime.

A failed saxophonist himself, he delights in musicians' parables of mischief and rebellion. In 1984 (appropriate date) the Prague Division of the Czech Musicians' Union was ordered to "stop all activities." The order, Škvorecký (pronounced *Shkvoretski*) reports, was in fact aimed at the 6,000 members of the union's *verboten* Jazz Section. But:

> since the decree did not explicitly mention the Jazz Section, the section carried on. The annoyed authorities sent an explicit command to the Prague Division to abolish the section immediately. The division duly having been ordered to stop *all* activities, they could not carry on *any* and could not therefore oblige.

All good clean bureaucratic fun, Škvorecký notes, but with its inevitable dark side. Trials and ten- to fourteen-year sentences for the chief union troublemakers, "shorter terms for minor perpetrators of thought crime."

The Orwellian allusion is, of course, deliberate. Škvorecký is not shy about his anti-Communism. His fierce politics have made him something of a problematic figure in his adoptive country, Canada, where he has lived and taught at the University of Toronto since 1968. An internationally celebrated literary figure, author of celebrated fiction—*The Engineer of Human Souls, The Brass Saxophone*, and, most recently, *Dvořák in Love*—yet *so* hostile to the Soviet Union, that workers' paradise looked to with sympathetic longing by countless well-fed Canadians of blandly socialist convictions. Škvorecký has no patience with them.

His essay "Are Canadians Politically Naive?" originally appeared in Canada's fogeyish conservative organ, the *Idler*. But it bears more than mere parochial interest. He takes one such naif (a *Winnipeg Sun* reporter) sternly to task for her glowing account of life behind the Iron Curtain on a visit to the World Assembly for Peace and Life Against Nuclear War held in Prague in 1983. After cataloguing this silly woman's insensitivity to the humiliations and oppression suffered by his countrymen, Škvorecký lashes out at her (and anyone else's) blind trust in the great god Peace: "Pacifism, the naive or cowardly efforts to extricate ourselves from our common North American destiny in a world of powerful totalitarianism, is a guaranteed road to war." Few Canadians have had the temerity to challenge him on this score, disagree though they may. Sam Solecki, the Toronto professor who edited and wrote the useful introduction to *Talkin' Moscow Blues*, registers Škvorecký's scorn for "intelleftuals" (as Mario Vargas Llosa calls them) though Solecki is one himself. He respectfully acknowledges that his author knows of what he speaks, quoting from Škvorecký's extraordinary political history:

> I have experienced all existing political systems of twentieth century Europe: liberal democracy until 1939, Nazism from 1939-1945, the uneasy democratic socialism of 1945-1948, Stalinism between 1948-1960, the liberalization of Communism from 1960-1967, the crazy attempt to square the circle in 1968, and the Attila-the-Hun solution of the *panzers* in August 1968 . . .

A forceful argument for listening to what this author has to say, even when his prose isn't entirely compelling. Josef Škvorecký is not Joseph Brodsky. Occasionally his command of English, or perhaps his translator's rendering of Czech, doesn't seem quite up to the fluency of his mind. No matter. It is certainly, as they say, close enough for jazz.

In the book's opening essay, "I Was Born in Nachód . . ." Škvorecký identifies himself as a reluctant dissident:

> I never intended to write satire—yet ended up producing something that is indistinguishable from satire. I never thought of myself as a dissident writer—yet I was stripped of my citizenship because of literary dissent. I never dreamt of writing history—yet perhaps a stranger perusing my saga about the cynical tenor saxophonist would get a more or less continuous picture of the last four decades of Czechoslovakia's history.

Born in 1924 in a small town on the northeastern border of Bohemia that would serve as the backdrop for much of his fiction, Škvorecký came of age amid the horrors of World War II and its aftermath. He was 14 when Neville Chamberlain signed away Czechoslovakia's freedom to Hitler in the Munich accord. Although he confesses to a greater interest at the time in jazz and young ladies than the vicissitudes of war, he worked in a Messerschmidt factory during the Nazi occupation and plotted unfulfilled sabotage there. After the bloodless Communist coup in 1948 that replaced democracy with Stalinism, he spent a desultory year in medical school and began writing seriously. First came *The Cowards* (1949), then *The Tank Corps* (1954, after his discharge from the Army). For his bold use of "common" language—much like Vassily Aksyonov's appropriation of Moscow slang—he gained entrée to Prague's underground elite. He mingled with Miloš Forman and other avant garde filmmakers, attracted the attention of playwright Václáv Havel, and during the pre-1968 thaw had been a "successful and exceedingly popular" scribe of hard-boiled detective stories. Only sporadically was he censured for the excessive libertinism or decadently un-Marxist behavior of his characters. Then came the grim moment in history he calls "Prague Winter," when Red Army tanks crushed the reforms of the country's tragic optimist Alexander Dubček. In August 1968, the *annus horribilis*, Škvorecký had just written *The Bass Saxophone* in a three-day frenzy and was vacationing in Paris with his wife when the radio brought them the news. The Škvoreckýs did not return home.

Rick Marin is the television critic for the Washington Times.

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The University of Toronto soon took him up. He taught American literature, while his wife, Zdeňa Salivarova, founded Sixty-Eight Publishers—an outlet for Czech writers ever since. In Canada he found "uneventful peace" and resumed his prolific career, fictionalizing his tumultuous autobiography in *The Engineer of Human Souls*, an extravagant and hefty novel he billed in its subtitle as "an entertainment of the old themes of life, women, fate, dreams, the working class, secret agents, love and death." In addition to his fiction, for which he is justly best known, Škvorecký contributed essays (collected here) to the *New Republic*, the *New York Times Book Review*, *The American Spectator*, and various Canadian literary organs. They are a casual mixture of scholarship, reminiscence, and polemics—pop cultural criticism weighted with something more profound. He writes with equal vim about poets, directors, the perils of literary translation. Throughout, he remains haunted by the specter of *realný socialismus*, which he approximates in English as "really existing socialism." This is the ideal Communism authorities proclaim to exist in Czechoslovakia, the rationale behind all their directives and abuses. "Ideological thinking follows paths free from the taint of reality," Škvorecký writes. Which is why he likes Canada: "There is no ideology." And under his basic test of the term—whether politics is compulsory or can be escaped—it might equally be applied to the United States.

Typical of the Communist-confounding paradoxes that fascinate Škvorecký is his account in *Red Music* of the arrival of Dixieland to Czechoslovakia in the early fifties.

> . . . although the bishops of Stalinist obscurantism damned the "music of cannibals," they had one problem. Its name was Dixieland. A type of the cannibal music with roots so patently folkloristic and often (the blues) so downright proletarian that even the most Orwellian falsifier of facts would be hard put to deny them.

So the music lived, as "Negro folklore" among Czech fans, the same fans, Škvorecký avers, who despised the state-approved American Negro Paul Robeson:

> . . . how we hated that black apostle who sang of his own free will, at open air concerts in Prague at a time when they were raising the Socialist leader Milada Horakova to the gallows, the only woman ever to be executed for political reasons in Czechoslovakia by Czechs.

"Two Peas in a Pod" deftly shows up the twin sides of the totalitarian coin, "left" and "right," by citing the interchangeability of *Hitlerjugend* rally songs with those of their Communist counterparts. Same melodies, lyrics only slightly revised. Revolution of any kind, concludes the title of another essay, "is usually the worst solution." He cautions misguided idealists against that most dangerous illusion that if *they* make the revolution it will be different from the ones which so far have always devoured their *young*. . . . Of course it won't be different, if it is a real revolution. Revolutions are pretty well alike. Wonderful, for some time, as Hemingway wrote. Then they deteriorate, as he also wrote.

Nowhere does Škvorecký offer his thoughts on the American revolution.

An appraisal of the new regime in Moscow would be even more welcome. Škvorecký's political ruminations on the Evil Empire could benefit from a post-glasnost perspective, though there's no indication it would change his mind. In a recent interview with the *Toronto Star*, he said of Mikhail Gorbachev:

> I don't denigrate him. I think he's an admirable man. But I simply don't think he can manage. If he stays in power long enough, it's probable that the life of the ordinary citizens in the Soviet Union will be made better, but he's not immortal. It's like feudalism, when you had good kings and bad kings. If you were lucky enough to live during the reign of a good king then you were relatively free and everything was nice. Then along comes Ivan the Terrible and that's the end of it.

When asked the difference between Prague's spring of '68 and glasnost today, Gorbachev replied, "Twenty years." Škvorecký knows better. He's seen too many Ivans. □

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The University of Georgia Press
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LANDSLIDE: THE UNMAKING OF THE PRESIDENT 1984-1988

Jane Mayer and Doyle McManus/Houghton Mifflin/$21.95

Fred Barnes

The thrust of this readable but hyped book about Ronald Reagan is that the Iran-contra scandal serves perfectly as a metaphor for his presidency. *The* metaphor, in fact. The prolonged economic boom, the revolutionary cuts in individual tax rates, the military buildup, the first arms control treaty that actually reduces nuclear weapons, the defeat of the Soviet military in Afghanistan, and the rehabilitation of the national psyche are trivial events in comparison. Iran-contra—a better handle is Iranamok—involved all the main strands of the Reagan regime and exposed what the authors call a "feckless presidency." Accomplishments before the scandal broke in November 1986 were largely perceived rather than real. "Reagan's first-term advisers elevated presidential stagecraft to an art form," Mayer and McManus write. His handlers cleverly found "blue backdrops to flatter his complexion" and produced "presidential playlets, complete with scripts, to send his homilies home." They "altered political realities simply by altering public perceptions. With the artful use of such techniques, Reagan moved public opinion, enabling him to change the entire direction of American politics."

This thesis won't fly, but Mayer and McManus make the best possible case for it. Their reporting on Reagan's personal role in Iranamok, for instance, is extraordinarily detailed and almost persuasive. I expected as much. McManus may not be a household name, but he is one of the best journalists at America's most underrated newspaper, the *Los Angeles Times*. And Mayer had her moments as a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*. They portray Reagan as soft-hearted and impressionable, and thus easy prey for the machinations (tears, accusations, threats, and so on) of the relatives of American hostages in Lebanon. Without a second thought, the President jumped at the idea of sending arms to Iran to get the hostages back. The idea that the five arms shipments might clear the way for new American ties to Iran—or at least to moderate Iranians poised to take power after the Ayatollah Khomeini—seems scarcely to have crossed Reagan's mind. The hostages were his chief concern. He asked about them daily, made known his ardent desire to see them freed, and didn't pay much attention to the niceties of how this might be pulled off. Once the arms deal was exposed and a political firestorm ensued, Reagan didn't see that he'd done anything wrong. In Iranamok, he was aloof, uninformed, wrongheaded, and a failure.

But that wasn't true for the other big ventures of his second term. Iranamok destroyed Reagan's effectiveness as a domestic political leader. As an independent force, he was finished. He needed either Congress or foreign governments to go along with his policies, or he was stymied. But that's not the same as having his entire presidency unmade. So Iran-contra falters as a metaphor. Reagan kept up with the twists and turns in Soviet-American relations, which wound up in better shape than at any time since

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Fred Barnes is a senior editor of the New Republic.

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World War II. He took a keen interest in schmoozing with Mikhail Gorbachev, and succeeded at it. He held out for the zero-zero option and crafted an INF treaty with the Soviets that easily passed muster in the Senate. He was a zombie some of the time, especially in the four months after the scandal broke, months in which he had surgery for cancer and was under the thumb of wife Nancy. But most of the time he wasn't. At the four summits with Gorbo, Reagan was highly engaged.

To buttress their argument that Reagan was practically a vegetable, Mayer and McManus indulge in one egregious piece of hype. The book opens with a five-page prologue that tells the story of James Cannon, an aide to Howard Baker who talked to White House officials about Reagan in the days before Baker officially took over as chief of staff in March 1987. It was Cannon who came to the conclusion that the Twenty-fifth Amendment should be considered on the grounds that Reagan might be incompetent to continue as President. This was a zany notion that nobody took seriously, even Cannon, I suspect. But that doesn't stop the authors from giving the episode great prominence. It sets the tone for the book, just as the opening salvo about Nancy Reagan and astrology established the theme of Donald Regan's White House memoir, *For the Record*.

To justify the attention given to Cannon, Mayer and McManus transform Cannon, an amiable functionary, into a major figure. "Though not especially known outside moderate Republican circles, Cannon had earned a reputation as a smart, tough operator," they write. "Engaging but unsentimental, he was cool under pressure and decisive when faced with a hard choice." This is ludicrous, not the Cannon that folks in Washington know.

There are also problems with the account of how Cannon raised the question of the Twenty-fifth Amendment. The interviews he held with White House staffers are described as "exhaustive." I wonder. A number of officials, including press secretary Marlin Fitzwater and national security adviser Colin Powell, insist they talked to Cannon only briefly and then only as part of a larger group, not one-on-one. For certain, Cannon talked to some aides who thought Reagan was terminally out-of-it. That's what Regan and his aides believed at the time. They had reasons for thinking this and a motive for trashing the President. Regan had gone through a struggle with Nancy Reagan—and her astrologer—over who'd influence Reagan. He'd lost. She wouldn't let Reagan show his face in public as Iran-contra eroded his presidency. Regan was frustrated. Then, with Nancy leading the charge, the Regan crowd was unceremoniously fired. You can imagine their attitude toward Reagan when Cannon chatted with them.

There's a final small point. The authors refer to the "finished memorandum" in which Cannon said invoking the Twenty-fifth Amendment should be considered. My understanding is that Cannon had notes, but he didn't produce a memo with the Twenty-fifth Amendment business in it.

Mayer and McManus don't like Reagan or Reaganism. They blame his tax and budget cuts for causing the 1981-82 recession. That's liberal nonsense. They claim that Reagan's hard-line posture toward the Soviet Union during his first term failed. In truth, it produced the breakthroughs that occurred in the second term. They sneer at the Strategic Defense Initiative. They make fun of Reagan's "fantasy" that the deficit could be reduced without boosting taxes or cutting Pentagon spending. They contend that Oliver North's "tin cup diplomacy"—raising private money to aid the Nicaraguan contras—was a "natural" outgrowth of "Reagan's privatized politics." And so on.

But this book cannot be dismissed lightly. It has terrific portraits of the way Nancy Reagan and Bud McFarlane operated at the White House. I learned a lot. Nancy personally went through the thousands of pictures taken weekly by White House photographers. She "determined which images the public saw, particularly when they included her." She signed "O.K. per N.R." on those to be released and tore the corner on those "deemed unflattering." She stopped a photographer from taking a picture of her husband, knees bared, in the hospital in January 1987. "Then she covered up her husband's knees and hastily placed some papers on his lap, to make it look as if he had been working." Then the picture was taken. Nancy got into more serious things too. "It was at her urging that the president called on the Senate Intelligence Committee to give North and [Admiral John] Poindexter 'use immunity,' meaning their testimony wouldn't be held against them in a trial," according to Mayer and McManus.

From all evidence, McFarlane was out of his depth as national security adviser. He had few allies, except in the press corps. He proved the adage that you can get good coverage by being a source of information for reporters. "While McFarlane was running the secret NSC operations, the White House press corps portrayed him as capable, wise, and steady, even as he was sliding toward emotional collapse," the authors correctly point out. McFarlane's departure from the White House was an example of life imitating art. By November 1985, he was ready to quit, but he couldn't quite pull the plug. It was a reporter, Thomas DeFrank of *Newsweek*, who forced his hand. DeFrank had learned of McFarlane's plan to quit. On the Saturday before DeFrank's item was to run, McFarlane was informed of it. "McFarlane just sighed," the authors write. He seemed to make up his mind on the spot to go and tell Reagan he was leaving. The next day, he did, only to be disappointed when Reagan accepted his resignation without a fight. Strange.

One nice bit of reporting in *Landslide* clears up a deceptive anecdote told by Michael Deaver in his kiss-and-tell book about Reagan, *Behind the Scenes*. Deaver recounted seeing a news photograph of a bandaged Lebanese baby whose arms, the caption said, had been blown off, presumably by the Israelis. He stormed into the Oval Office and urged Reagan to halt the Israeli assault on Beirut. The complacent President got Menachem Begin on the phone and quickly a cease-fire was arranged. In Deaver's book, the story stopped there. But Mayer and McManus found that the caption was mistaken. "Israeli authorities went to the trouble of finding the injured child, who had indeed been hurt, but not by Israeli bombs, and who under the bandages still had the use of both arms," they write. "Still, as was so often true with Reagan, the facts didn't matter as much as the emotional impact."

Too true. The game of emotions proved harmful two ways, Mayer and McManus contend. First, the White House put on gala welcomes for freed hostages, beginning with those just back from the American embassy in Tehran in 1981. Reagan aides figured Reagan would gain popularity from these events which exploited the public's exhilaration over the release of the hostages. The downside was that it showed terrorists how important hostages were to America—and to Reagan personally. Second, there were Reagan's easily tugged heart strings. When he read a scared letter from the TWA 847 hostages in 1985, he immediately asked what could be done to get them freed, even if it meant complying with the demands of terrorists. A few days later he met in Illinois with relatives of various hostages in Lebanon, including the family of Father Lawrence Jenco, a Catholic priest. The Jencos browbeat Reagan, and he was shaken by the encounter. "Their presence may have marked the beginning of the end of Reagan's resolve on terrorism," Mayer and McManus write. Soon arms were flowing to Iran.

The story of the arms deal has been told before, but never more coherently or dramatically than in *Landslide*. It is a depressing tale. The inescapable conclusion is that McFarlane and North were in over their heads. They were repeatedly deceived

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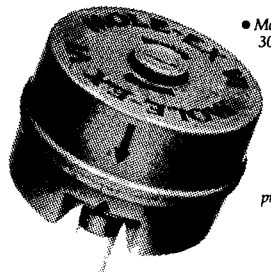

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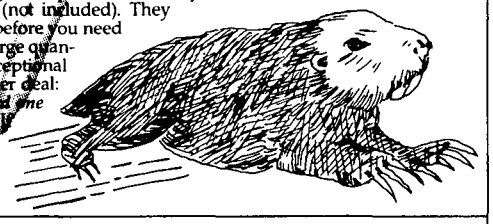

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by their go-between with Iran, sleazebag arms merchant Manucher Ghorbanifar, who wanted an arms sale however he could get it. Ghorbanifar assured McFarlane and North they'd be dealing with senior Iranian officials who were willing to see that all the hostages were freed. Time after time when this proved to be untrue, the Americans went ahead with another shipment.

The most riveting chapter in the book is an account of McFarlane's secret trip to Iran in 1986. He had delusions of grandeur, dreaming about the creation of a new relationship between the United States and Iran. That achieved, "the Reagan administration could virtually redraw the map of the Middle East. An Iranian-American entente would be a major vexation for the Soviet Union, which was already worried about Iran's support for Muslim rebels in neighboring Afghanistan." But reality was different. In Tehran, the Iranians he dealt with were middle-level bureaucrats. All they wanted were arms. All the Reagan Administration got was shame. □

A LIFE

Elia Kazan/Alfred A. Knopf/$24.95

Lionel Abel

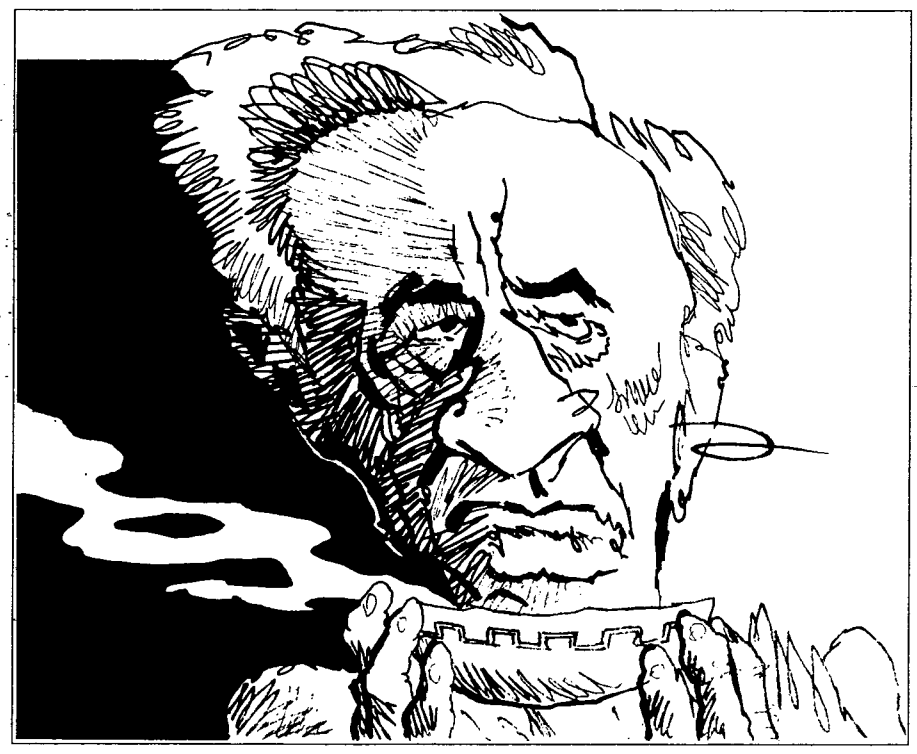
In a heated discussion of theater and its values with Harold Clurman—discussions with Clurman always tended to be heated—he remarked that the final and definitive critic of a play can be none other than its director. I at once confronted him with the consequences of holding such a view. It would follow—for our generation, at least—that the definitive critic of *Hamlet* could be none other than Laurence Olivier, and could not possibly be Hazlitt or Coleridge or Goethe (who explained the presence of Fortinbras in the play); Barrault would have to be called the real critic of Racine's *Andromache*, and not Charles Peguy, who had the insight to note that in this, as in Racine's other tragedies, the victimizer is a good deal less cruel than his victim. But Harold held to his view, which was based on a particular notion of value, involving, as a component, *success on Broadway.* I am referring to a time, of course, when Broadway had a meaning it is quite bereft of today.

By Clurman's standard, the definitive critic of the late forties, the fifties, and the sixties, could not be Clurman himself: it is his own finger which points to Elia Kazan. He it was who directed (and with success on Broadway) the outstanding plays of the period: *The Skin of Our Teeth, A Streetcar Named Desire, Death of a Salesman,* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.* These were very different types of plays, and must have required very different directorial decisions. True, Kazan never tried his hand at any of the avant-garde works of the period. He left it to Herbert Berghof to put on *Waiting for Godot*, and to Allen Schneider to do *Endgame.* Gene Frankel directed *The Blacks* and Quintero *The Balcony.* It is thus that Beckett and Genet were served, in the main, off Broadway. From all of which one must conclude that Kazan was by no means a critic of real stature, and one must add something against Clurman, too. He turned down *The Blacks* when he was offered its direction, and for the same reason Kazan would not take on any play of that type; it did not promise success on Broadway, and such success entered into the very concept of good theater dear to both directors.

Lionel Abel, professor emeritus at the State University of New York at Buffalo, is author of Metatheatre, The Intellectual Follies, *and, most recently,* Important Nonsense *(Prometheus Books).*

Their notion of value is by no means as absurd as it may seem today, now that Broadway has all but expired. Why do I say this? I am told that David Mamet, who is anything but avant garde, cannot even with the best of notices succeed on Broadway, which is now restricted to theatrical monstrosities like a musical—a comedy?—about the "wretched of the earth." Nevertheless it is true that success on the stage is required for any play to have effect, and even to be understood. As Kenneth Rexroth once wrote in reviewing a play of mine for the *San Francisco Examiner,* "One can't know the worth of a play until it is properly cast and intelligently directed." I have seen productions of *Oedipus* that might make one think its playwright a tyro.

So immediate success is important for a play, while a novel can await its readers. Stendhal could hope that sixty years after his death his books would find their rightful audience. But no playwright can take satisfaction in the thought of posthumous success on the stage. Now directors have to be especially sensitive to the dependence of a play on its staging, and are not to be criticized for turning down plays they think are likely to flop. But the fifties introduced us to a notion neither Clurman nor Kazan even considered, i.e., that there could be a kind of theatrical success for plays not at all intended for Broadway. Arthur Miller's foolish remarks against Beckett—Clurman, in conversation, said pretty much the same—were due to an unwillingness, no doubt shared by Kazan, to think seriously of any theater piece not Broadway bound. So if success on the stage is important to our estimation of theatrical work, the mistake of Clurman and Kazan was simply this: they identified success with the particular kind of success accorded by Broadway.



Most of the plays Kazan directed were indeed Broadway successes, and I think deservedly so. What about the quality of his direction? I think it must be granted that he was the best director on the Broadway of his time, as Jed Harris had been in the decade before him. Yet J. Hoberman, in reviewing *A Life* in the *Village Voice* (May 17, 1988), writes that if it had not been for the information Kazan gave to the Un-American Affairs Committee, "he might have been a contender." A contender for what? For an Obie given by the *Voice*? And who does Mr. Hoberman assume was the champion director of the period? I submit that virtue in politics and in stage direction involve quite different qualities, and call for different kinds of praise. And on the matter of informing: its morality depends apparently on *who* has done it. Genet lost none of his appeal to the left in France, or here for that matter, when he confessed to having treacherously informed on his pals in crime, calling such treachery "beautiful." Sartre did dub him a traitor, but forgave him with the phrase "like Bukharin." But Bukharin was no traitor, as the Russians have now conceded.

The strengths of this autobiography are in the stories about Kazan's famous acquaintances, told with good, gossipy elan. But I must distinguish the quality of the storytelling from the moral slant Kazan gives his tales. Certainly the shout of Boris Aronson, caught in bed with another woman by his wife, "It's not me!" can be enjoyed by everyone, but there are not a few who will find unacceptable the moral Kazan tries to draw from it, as from his other recountings, i.e., in life, one has to deceive others or oneself, and it is better (morally?) to deceive others.

Deception was almost the rule by which Kazan conducted his sexual affairs, and his transgression against the left, when he informed on his Communist friends and acquaintances, was of a piece with his politics in matters of sex and sentiment. About his double dealing he is quite forthright. I quote:

> What I had decided without knowing it, was that I would live in conflict and confusion. I knew what that would mean: I'd have to cheat, lie, fake, dissemble—all shameful, all humiliating, all necessary if you want to have what I've called "both."

Here I have two comments: According to Kazan, he did *not know* the decision he was making, but *did know* what the meaning of the decision he did not know he was making would be. Unlikely, to say the least. And my second comment is this: However one judges his chosen policy of lying, cheating, and faking (in matters of politics,

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theater, and sex), how are we to know that he has not continued that policy in the writing of this book? How can we take his word for anything?

Kazan writes with pride of his Greek heritage, and I believe there is a connection between the lying to which he admits and the reputation for untrustworthiness of the ancient Greeks. There is not only the line in Vergil, "I fear the Greeks bringing gifts"; there also is the judgment of the Greeks in the *Electra* of Euripides: "They are unworthy of trust." And in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus refers to "argive Helen" as "the wooden mare of Troy in whom a score of heroes slept," thus summing up in a single image Greek cleverness and deceit in matters political, military, and sexual. A learned friend of mine once remarked disparagingly of Nietzsche, "There is one thing he never understood about the Greeks." "What was that?" I wanted to know. "Their perfidy," he said.

Kazan has written perfidiously of those he claims to admire. When in his pages one reads some praise of a famous acquaintance, it is best not to take this as heartfelt. A few pages later one may find the acquaintance roundly damned. A case in point is his treatment of Harold Clurman. On the one hand he tells us that Clurman was the wisest and most knowledgeable in all matters of the theater, but a few pages later on we learn that he was hopelessly inept as a director.

Kazan reminds me of the image Ulysses gives of time in *Troilus and Cressida*, comparing it to the host who, as he greets each newcomer, looks over the latter's shoulder towards the next to enter. "A great-sized monster of ingratitude," Ulysses calls Time. But Kazan is even more ill-mannered in his treatment of those he has greeted admiringly. He draws them enthusiastically into his domain, and as their backs are turned, vigorously boots them in the behind . . .

Shifts in judgment are typical of Kazan, and he fears to be taken—he thinks this would be mistaking him—for a scoundrel. I agree he is not that. I think rather that he was and still is in all his endeavors, literary, theatrical, political, sexual, what Georg Simmel called "a flirt." "Flirtation," the German philosopher wrote, ". . . is the form in which the indecisiveness of life is crystallized into a positive way of acting . . . in the act of taking hold of something only to let it fall again, of letting it drop only to take hold of it once more, in what could be called the tentative turning toward something on which its own denial falls." □

HEAVY DRINKING: THE MYTH OF ALCOHOLISM AS A DISEASE

Herbert Fingarette/University of California Press/$16.95

Peter Skerry

How does a philosopher advancing a free-will, individual-responsibility argument write a book that ends up dismissing one of America's best known self-help efforts? The philosopher is Herbert Fingarette, a professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara. The self-help group is Alcoholics Anonymous. His book is *Heavy Drinking: The Myth of Alcoholism as a Disease*. And the answer to my question is in that subtitle.

Although not directed exclusively at Alcoholics Anonymous, Fingarette's brief work argues persuasively against the "enlightened" view on which AA and countless other alcohol treatment programs are premised: that alcoholism is a biologically rooted disease over which its victims have no control and for which the only "cure" is total abstinence. Carefully reviewing the scientific evidence, Fingarette demonstrates that, while not without physiological and genetic aspects, alcoholism is much more accurately described as a range of maladaptive behavior that individuals learn for a variety of reasons.

By wrapping the disease theory of alcoholism in the mystique of medical expertise, its proponents have little trouble extracting more than $1 billion annually from public and private sources for treatments that Fingarette reveals to be of dubious effectiveness. More to the point, such expenditures focus on one type of alcohol abuser, and neglect the millions of problem drinkers—"the heavy drinkers" in the title—who may not fit the classic profile of "the alcoholic," but whose lives are nevertheless affected by alcohol abuse. Indeed, while estimates of the number of alcoholics in the United States range as high as 10 million, Fingarette notes that "approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population drinks enough to be . . . at substantial risk of having alcohol-related problems."

Fingarette takes an eclectic approach, advocating a variety of individual treatments. Hardly a libertarian, he argues for government policies to reduce alcohol consumption. Citing the anti-smoking efforts of recent decades, Fingarette favors public education campaigns, increased penalties for drunk driving, and, in particular, increased taxes on alcohol. He points out that state and federal liquor taxes have not kept up with inflation since the 1950s. As a result, the real cost of liquor has declined. Fingarette calculates that moderate tax increases would save lives: based on 1981 prices, sixteen cents tacked on to a fifth of liquor would reduce liver cirrhosis mortality by 1.9 percent—about 600 deaths each year. Doubling the federal liquor tax, he reckons, would decrease cirrhosis mortality by about 6,000 cases annually.

Despite his convincing review of the scientific evidence and quite reasonable public policy prescriptions, Fingarette frequently pushes his case too far. He argues as though the disease view were so pervasive that alcoholics are routinely exonerated from all individual responsibility for the consequences of their behavior. Lost sight of here are the recent activities of groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), which have led to stiffer legal penalties, as well as increases in the legal drinking age from 18 to 21.

Fingarette's argument also leaves a number of loose ends. Having debunked the value of medical expertise in many treatments, he fails to square this with AA's explicit rejection of experts and its exclusive reliance on the counsel and fellowship of recovered alcoholics. Nor does he reconcile his criticism of the cost of treatment programs with the fact that AA charges nothing. For that matter, he neglects to explain why, with AA costing nothing, millions are spent on programs that rely on essentially the same methods and philosophy.

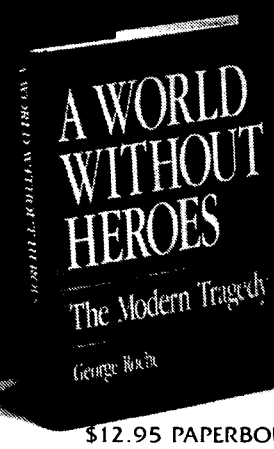
Fingarette may exaggerate the extent to which the public at large has accepted the view of alcoholism as a disease, but it is true that this perspective has been more widely accepted than many other "enlightened" opinions. On most social-policy questions—welfare, crime, homelessness—experts typically offer analyses that underplay or completely ignore moral choice and individual responsibility, which are precisely the factors laymen stress. What is it about alcoholism that causes the public to back away from moralistic, free-will explanations and accept the deterministic view?

Fingarette doesn't address this intriguing question, but perhaps the answer has something to do with the prevalence of alcoholism in so many social groups, making it much

Peter Skerry is a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

A WORLD WITHOUT HEROES: THE MODERN TRAGEDY

By George Roche



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more difficult to dismiss as someone else's moral failing. Or perhaps alcohol treatment programs—and the alcohol abusers and their families who resort to them—rely on a more subtle blend of moral toughness and therapeutic compassion than Fingarette recognizes. For example, he calls attention to the "inconsistency" between AA's rhetoric about alcoholics having no control over their disease, and the reality that recovery begins when the individual exercises control by refusing to drink.

But what the author perceives to be an inconsistency in AA might just as well be seen as the ambiguity inherent in most endeavors—certainly most therapeutic or pedagogical endeavors—that call for a balance between zealously holding individuals responsible for their plight, and freeing them from self-doubt and guilt long enough to summon the courage to deal with their problems. Fingarette acknowledges this necessary balance in his laudatory account of treatment programs that assume individuals *do* have the power to choose whether or not, or how much, they will drink; but that also teach that in spite of their best efforts individuals will slip and fail—in other words, that their free will is not without limits.

Thus, Fingarette sets himself the explicit task of carving out a moderate free-will perspective that avoids both heavy-handed moralism and mindless determinism. As he puts it:

> . . . we must put aside both the simplistic moralism, which taught that a sincere resolve was enough, and the loss-of-control hypothesis, which viewed each failure of willpower as proof that the drinker's will had been incapacitated by disease. Let us instead view willpower as we do the signing of a contract. Signing a contract does not get the job done, but neither do we think that contracts are pointless, meaningless statements. They are necessary and important elements within a sequence of events that may or may not result in the fulfillment of the intended transaction.

In light of this, Fingarette's single-minded pursuit of AA seems misguided. For although his scientific argument against the disease theory popularized by AA is surely valid, his criticisms of the program itself are less so. Indeed, AA would seem to embody—in practice, if not in theory—much that he advocates for treatment programs.

But in spite of his polemical bender against AA, Fingarette has written a useful guide through a thicket of questions raised by our persistent problems with alcohol abuse. Most social-policy debates inevitably get tangled in the thorny problem of drawing lines between individual and social responsibility—between free will and determinism. By cutting a neat swath through some of the thicket, at least, *Heavy Drinking* demonstrates a relevance that goes well beyond its specific subject. □

THE KIROV AFFAIR

Adam Ulam/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/$19.95

Joseph Shattan

According to the *Dictionary of Film Terms*, a McGuffin is a "plotting device for setting a story into motion." It can refer to something that all the characters are trying to get their hands on—like the statue in *The Maltese Falcon* or the gem in *The Pink Panther*—or it can apply to someone who is lost and being sought—the missing heir, for example, in Alfred Hitchcock's *Family Plot*. In fact, whatever provides the "element of dramatic curiosity" in a film—and by extension, a novel—can qualify as a McGuffin.

In Adam Ulam's new novel, *The Kirov Affair*, the 1934 murder of Sergei Mironovich Kirov, Communist boss of Leningrad, is the McGuffin. For behind this murder, which ushered in a period of mass purges and terror throughout the Soviet Union, is a dark and terrible secret known only to one man, Mikhail Kondratiev, the principal protagonist of Ulam's novel. What is this awful secret that, even fifty years after the event, haunts poor Mikhail Alexandrovich? And how did Sergei Kirov really meet his Maker? Not until the very end of *The Kirov Affair*, dear reader, do we learn the answers to these questions, and although a captious critic might point out that the truth turns out to be considerably less portentous than we had been led to believe, even such a critic would have to grant that as a means of generating suspense and keeping reader and novel in constant propinquity, Kirov's murder is the perfect McGuffin.

But hold on just one moment here! We're not discussing the work of some young thriller-writer making his novelistic debut, you know; we're talking about a book by Prof. Adam Ulam, the director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University and the author of some sixteen scholarly tomes. Since when does a man of his stature suddenly involve himself with popular fiction? After all, would Prof. Gertrude Himmelfarb ever stoop to concoct a historical romance about John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor? Would Prof. John P. Roche ever produce a black comedy about LBJ and the intellectuals? Would Prof. Lewis Feuer, that great authority on Marxism, ever write a mystery thriller about Karl Marx set in Victorian London?

Well, as a matter of fact, about five years ago Professor Feuer did write precisely such a novel. It is called *The Case of the Revolutionist's Daughter: Sherlock Holmes Meets Karl Marx* and, in my humble estimation, it is one of the unrecognized classics of contemporary fiction. What makes Feuer's book so interesting is that he uses the medium of fiction to address such issues as the spiritual crisis of modernity, which would be unbearably tedious if presented in a more straightforward, scholarly fashion.

Similarly, Adam Ulam uses fiction to make some important points about Soviet diplomatic history that he could not make nearly as effectively in a more scholarly work. Consider, for example, the Cuban Missile Crisis. It is an extraordinary fact that, to this day, no one knows for sure what led Khrushchev to introduce ballistic missiles into Cuba during the late summer and early fall of 1962. Most scholars believe that Khrushchev's move reflected a desire to alter the strategic nuclear balance in Moscow's favor, but that's just a guess, and not an especially inspired one, at that. Ulam, however, has a different explanation. As he recently put it in *Foreign Affairs*:

> There is a great deal of circumstantial evidence that the Soviet missiles were intended to be used for bargaining: Washington would agree to a German treaty on Soviet terms as the price for withdrawal of the missiles. And it is also likely that another part of the bargain would have had the United States lifting its protective shield over Taiwan, the concession which Khrushchev hoped (over-optimistically) would induce Mao to give up Chinese plans to acquire nuclear weapons.

The problem with Ulam's argument is that what looks like "a great deal of circumstantial evidence" to one scholar is nothing but the "merest speculation" to another. In the absence of genuine documentation, there is simply no way that Ulam the scholar can make a really convincing case. But with Ulam the novelist, it's another matter altogether. In a work of fiction, Ulam is free to bring into play his immense intuitive gifts, his feel for how Khrushchev's mind worked, how the Politburo operates, and how devious Soviet foreign policy maneuvers can be. So when he has Khrushchev exclaim to his Politburo colleagues, "I shall also say [to the Americans]: We offer to pull out those damnable weapons from Cuba, each and every one of them . . . if your government signs a German peace treaty, guaranteeing that no such weapons will be produced or stored on German territory," we feel that this is not just a plausible reading of Khrushchev's motives, but the only explanation that makes sense.

Of course, the Cuban Missile Crisis is just one of many historical incidents described by Ulam in *The Kirov Affair*. From the origins of the Cold War to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to the current crisis of the Soviet regime, everything is examined by Ulam, but with a novelist's rather than a scholar's eye. The result is a portrait of Soviet history that is at once familiar yet somehow new and illuminating—a portrait that conveys an overall sense of Soviet foreign policy without getting too bogged down in facts, dates, and footnotes.

In addition to treating Soviet history in a novel (pardon the pun) way, Ulam uses *The Kirov Affair* to poke fun at the pretensions of his academic colleagues. Some decades ago, Ulam expressed his disenchantment with the state of Soviet studies in his customary witty and provocative way. "Let me invoke a fictitious case of two fictitious characters," he wrote, "X and Y":

> In his attempt to learn as much as possible about the Soviet Union, X, between roughly 1930 and 1950, read nothing but the works of reputable, non-Communist authors. He grounded himself on the writings of the Webbs and Sir John Maynard Keynes. Turning to the American academicians, he followed the studies of the Soviet government, law, and various aspects of Soviet society which might have come from the pen of a professor at Chicago, Harvard, Columbia or Williams. . . .
>
> His friend Y had an equal ambition to learn, but his taste ran to the non-scholarly and melodramatic. Indifferent to objectivity, he would seek the key to Soviet politics in the writings of the avowed enemies of the regime, like the ex-Mensheviks; he would delight in the fictional accounts *à la* Koestler or Victor Serge. . . . He would infuriate X by insisting that there were aspects of Soviet politics which are more easily understood by studying the struggle between Al Capone and Dan Torrio than the one between Lenin and Martov, or the dispute about "socialism in one country."
>
> Which of our fictitious characters would have been in a better position to understand the nature of Soviet politics under Stalin?

Joseph Shattan, a frequent contributor, is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

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In *The Kirov Affair,* Ulam carries his vendetta against professional Sovietologists a step further. He shows us how members of the Politburo eagerly seek out Western analyses of Soviet affairs—not for purposes of enlightenment, but for entertainment! He regales us with Western analyses and conjectures that are intelligent, plausible—and invariably wrong. And, in one especially funny scene, he brings together a group of Sovietologists asked to advise the U.S. delegation to the arms control talks in Geneva—with results that defy description. It is obvious that Ulam is drawing on a deep and bitter well of personal experience in describing these academic quacks. But it is equally obvious that Ulam is too much the old-fashioned gentleman to name names. By presenting his criticisms in fictional form, Ulam can let off steam without bruising too many egos.

Of course, Ulam's indictment of academic Sovietology is not meant to be a put-down of scholarship *per se.* Rather, his point is that in studying Soviet affairs, all the methodologies in the world are useless unless one is gifted with what the Germans call *Fingerspitzengefuhl*—a sense of how things really work in the Soviet Union that has much more in common with the novelist's insight than with the computer's printout. How to acquire *Fingerspitzengefuhl* is obviously a complex question, but perhaps the best way to begin is by immersion in the collected works—fictional and non-fictional—of the remarkable Adam Ulam. □

BEYOND GOOD INTENTIONS: A BIBLICAL VIEW OF POLITICS

Doug Bandow/Crossway Books/$9.95 paper

Herbert Schlossberg

Readers familiar with Bandow's work could become disoriented reading the title of this book: Doug Bandow and a *biblical* view?—must be a different fellow from the Cato Institute writer of the same name who expounds on libertarian themes in *The American Spectator* and many other publications. Nope: same man. But aren't libertarians social atomists, suspicious of overarching structures that limit the absolute sovereignty of the individual? And isn't a biblical view necessarily going to posit a sovereign presence *above* the individual? And mustn't that mean that Bandow is trying to square the circle? Yes, yes, and maybe.

This book couldn't have come at a better time. People interested in the relationship between politics and religion have been taken for a wild ride these last ten years. For a generation or so court decisions had the effect of erecting into a constitutional principle an offhand remark about a "wall of separation" between church and state in a letter of Jefferson's. Hard to imagine a more dubious interpretation of the First Amendment. This didn't faze the left wing of the mainline churches, which nonchalantly and effectively continued their lobbying operations in Washington on behalf of their favorite causes. Establishment figures seldom complained about such practices. But in the late 1970s conservative Christian groups began speaking to the political scene and there was an uproar. The double-standard persists to this day.

As a result of the unsettled situation, we've had a burst of interest in the church-state issue. Unlike most of the writers who work this field, however, Bandow has not given us a theoretical treatise. Rather he speaks to those in his own theological camp and interprets for them their proper role in the nation's political life.

A lot of Bandow's work has been in what I think of as the Edgar Kennedy school of political analysis. You read his short pieces and do a slow burn at the incredible boondoggles perpetrated against the citizenry by politicians intent on giving their favorite leeches something to batten on. (As I write, for example, the *Wall Street Journal* arrives with a Bandow article describing the efforts of Uncle Sap to prop up the maritime industry with operating and construction differential subsidies, guarantees on mortgages and other loans, and cargo preference laws.) Such writing is interesting and necessary, but it isn't intellectually demanding. To understand the broader meanings of political life, above all the interaction of the underlying ontological and ethical issues with the mundane political processes, an analyst needs an impressive combination of mental acuity and mature judgment.

Surprisingly for so young a man, Bandow has it. His point of view is unapologetically that of reformed Protestantism. In addition to his rejection of the reigning humanist consensus, he has no sympathy with the disdain for political life that comes from the Anabaptist reformation (and until recently was also characteristic of fundamentalism), nor with the passive subservience to the state that has characterized much of the Eastern Orthodox and Lutheran experience. And none for the occasional attempts by the Roman hierarchy to wield both the spiritual and temporal sword.

Bandow's three major assumptions come from the Reformed thinking that animates so much of this book. (Actually he uses the term *Puritan*, but that's just the guise in which the Reformed faith was originally mediated to the new world.) First, he insists that the state cannot bring heaven on earth. To expect governments to solve all problems, wipe away all tears, and bring in the millennium is to transform them into idols. Second, *government* must not be equated with the state. Rather, we should recognize that there are many forms of governance. The individual exercising self-control is one, and so are the family, the school, the church, the debating society, and so on. Each exercises legitimate governance in its own sphere, as does the civil government that we too often take to be the sole source of government. Bandow's third major assumption is that ethical principles are not subject to the vagaries of the historical moment but are rooted in the creation; they come from the authority of God and are transmitted to us principally in the Bible.

The third assumption will cause the greatest difficulty to conservatives of a more secular bent, but it is the best safeguard to retain the integrity of the first two. For Bandow establishes through the citation of numerous passages that the Hebrew and Christian scriptures envision the state as the entity that brings to us the blessings of justice. And justice is not defined in terms that would appeal to the "social justice" curia, with its penchant for redistribution and quasi-pacifism. It centers instead on the protection of life and property from those who threaten them.

But Bandow doesn't identify this theologically based notion of the state with the rule of the church, nor does he countenance special privileges for the group which shares his theology. Justice is blind and cannot discern the religious convictions of the citizens; Bandow makes much of the Old Testament requirement that Israel treat the foreigners living on the land with justice and respect. And he is completely without sympathy for some of the shibboleths of the religious right—prayer in the schools, for example. He regards as a calamity the rule over civic life of an ecclesiastical establishment of any stripe.

Nevertheless, in Bandow's vision the state, in order to bring about justice, must rule in accordance with those fixed

Herbert Schlossberg is the author of Idols for Destruction *(Thomas Nelson).*

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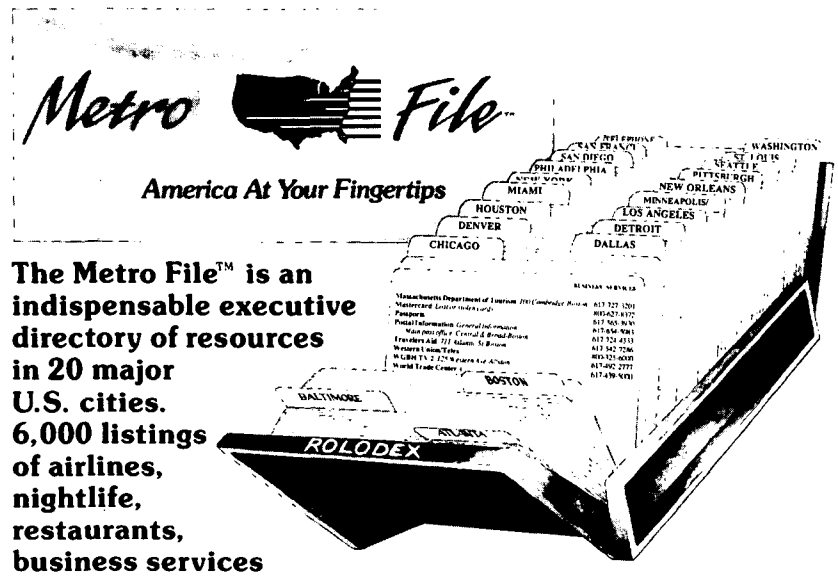

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principles of moral reasoning that are enshrined in the ancient Hebrew and Christian texts. How is that to be done in a land in which people disagree on the relevance of those texts, and on almost everything else besides? That is a problem for Bandow, but it is no less a problem for every other theorist who is not an anarchist. A state by its nature exercises compulsion and it does so legitimately even in the midst of the inevitable disagreements over its policies. The question is whether its ends and its means really are just, and the answer to that question lies in the divine mandate (or, as some would put it, in the natural law).

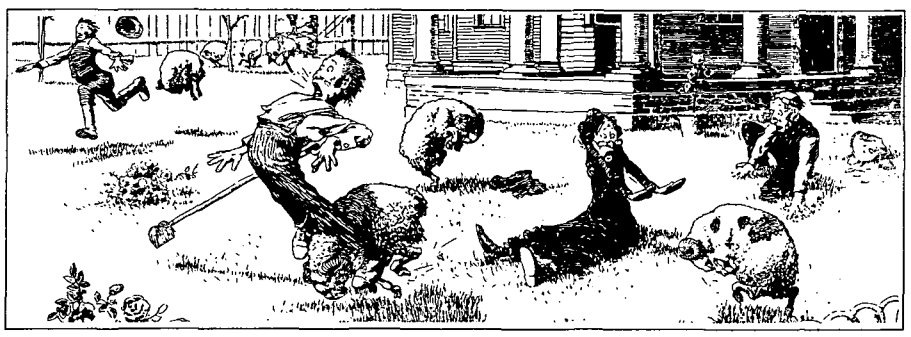
How does Bandow connect the requirements of divine law with the practical decisions that governments must make? He does it first by drawing a sharp distinction between the two. The big principles are justice, the protection of human life, responsibility for the poor, respect for the individual, the rejection of the state as idol, the protection of the family, and the obligation to strive for peace. He believes the churches have a responsibility to stress these principles. But he wants the church officers to stay out of the prudential decisions that implement them. He thinks the hierarchies have made fools of themselves in advocating this or that policy with respect to, say, welfare reform or military strategy, and at the same time have allowed themselves to be drawn away from accomplishing their real mission.

Bandow has been least successful in making the connections between the divine law on the one hand and the prudential decisions that implement it on the other. Not that this is an easy matter to deal with. Because the libertarian ethic still has something of a hold on him, he cuts the Gordian knot in a way that many reformed thinkers would not countenance. For example, he retains the notion of "victimless crimes" which the state is obliged to ignore. The state must oppose abortion, in his view, because human life is at stake, but there is no reason for the state to meddle in such activities as drug abuse and adultery, because there are no victims. Yet it could be argued that much of the pathology in American social life comes from the breakdown of the family, of which drug abuse and infidelity are two major causes. The victims are legion.

This difficulty is thrown into sharp relief by the many citations in the book from the works of R. J. Rushdoony. The salutary anti-state-as-idol approach of the theonomist Rushdoony lends itself only in a superficial way to Bandow's limited libertarianism, and it's easy to imagine Rushdoony doing a slow burn of his own at Bandow's separation of the requirements of God's law from the "prudential" reasoning that goes into the actual formulation of policy.

As you would expect, this book is especially hard on the left. Yet Fred Barnes's remark on the back cover that both left and right will wince at it is not misplaced. Bandow asserts that modern conservatives are as fully in tune with the envy-driven transfer society as the opposition; conservatives just feed a different set of parasites. Bandow doesn't believe that they display any more moral rectitude than the left. And he is critical of the apparent lack of compassion in conservative ranks that has made it easy for the left to pose as the party of compassion. He also has some sharp words for classical liberalism (which, as far as I can tell, is indistinguishable from libertarianism). He thinks this point of view has a value-free sterility and fails to recognize communal responsibilities. Furthermore, since it has its roots in the Enlightenment vision of the eighteenth century, it is fundamentally anti-Christian.

Beyond Good Intentions makes an important contribution to the contemporary debate; Bandow's efforts help us see how the biblical heritage can be brought back to public life while obviating fears of rule by church officials. I'm happy to see that the Cato Institute, Washington's premier libertarian think tank, is supporting Bandow in these efforts as well as in his more obviously libertarian work. I would have thought that emphasizing an ontologically based moral law would put him outside the pale. Bandow is frank to show this tension in the preface as he pays tribute to Ed Crane, the president of Cato, while speaking openly of their differences on spiritual matters. And that suggests that we'll do better to look closely at what Bandow says than to worry too much about how it fits libertarian doctrine. □



GEORGE B. McCLELLAN: THE YOUNG NAPOLEON

Stephen W. Sears/Ticknor & Fields/$24.95

Joe Mysak

The best thing that can be said about Gen. George Brinton McClellan is that at a critical juncture in history—the year 1862, to be precise—he did not take the Army of the Potomac, march on Washington, and relieve the Lincoln administration.

Certainly he had his reasons for doing so. A professional soldier, he disliked civilian meddling in military affairs, and had since his service in the Mexican War. The abolitionist policies of Northern fire-eaters were distasteful to him. He considered Lincoln a "baboon." But more than that, when making war, McClellan was "a man possessed by demons and delusions," according to his biographer, Stephen W. Sears.

Such men are dangerous. Fortunately, none of McClellan's demons were disloyal to the Union, although they were hardly loyal to the Republican administration which hired him. Nor did they possess any creative spark in regard to his personal destiny. But the catalogue of his demons and delusions is nevertheless a heavy one, and Sears, whose *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam* documented McClellan's biggest day, lists them all:

> He believed beyond any doubt that his Confederate enemies faced him with forces substantially greater than his own. He believed with equal conviction that enemies at the head of his own government conspired to see him and his army defeated so as to carry out their traitorous purposes. He believed himself to be God's chosen instrument for saving the Union. When he lost the courage to fight, as he did in every battle, he believed he was preserving his army to fight the next time on another and better day.

Sears presents his case in an effective and brief introduction, and proves it conclusively in a book written entirely from original, primary sources, which include scores of letters the general wrote to his friends, and to his wife. The lovely Nelly had a reputation as a charming hostess; she was certainly long-suffering: McClellan wrote to her daily in a series of remarkable letters whose style might best be described as delusion tinged with hysteria. Explaining away the failure of the Peninsula campaign, he wrote her, "When they begin to reap the whirlwind that they have sown I may still be in a position to do something to save my country. With all their faults I *do* love my countrymen & if I can save them I will yet do so."

The dashing McClellan took high command at the tender age of 35 and was dubbed by his friends and the press "The Young Napoleon." He was, by all accounts, keenly intelligent—both before and after the war he was a successful businessman. He sat a horse well. He was fluent in French. He liked to pose with one hand tucked into his uniform coat. There, however, the comparisons ended. Napoleon was ever audacious; McClellan, never, with the exasperating results familiar to all Civil War buffs.

McClellan was, as Lincoln termed him, the general with "the slows." He was never happier than when in camp, drilling his soldiers, riding amongst them to carefully orchestrated cheers, busying himself with administrative duties that might better have been handled by subordinates. He was in thrall to his "one safe rule of war": prepare for the worst. "What was a normal precaution . . . became for him an obsession, a self-fulfilling prophecy; in preparing for the worst, he came to anticipate and then expect the worst," writes Sears.

He was never worse than when in command on the battlefield. Preparing for the defense of Washington early in the war, he came to believe that the enemy army numbered no less than 100,000, compared to his own of roughly 80,000. "Of all the appraisals of the enemy that he would make during his months of high command, this first one was pivotal," according to Sears. "It fixed the pattern for those that followed: he was heavily outnumbered; he must be immediately reinforced at whatever cost to other operations; he was solely responsible for the fate of the nation; he must have full and unfettered control to meet the crisis. A man of George McClellan's inflexible certitude could not tolerate dissent from these conclusions."

Sears notes that McClellan was "by

Joe Mysak, The American Spectator*'s chief saloon correspondent, is managing editor of the* Bond Buyer.

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no means the only Civil War general to believe he was outnumbered when he was not, but he was the only one to believe it so obstinately and for so long."

McClellan actually took the field few times. He attempted to take Richmond in the Peninsula campaign, typically stalled before what he thought were superior enemy forces, and was finally rebuffed in a close call during the fighting of the Seven Days. He watched smugly as General Pope lost the Second Battle of Bull Run. When he was given yet another life as commander, Lee's famous Lost Orders, detailing the Confederate order of battle at Antietam, came into his hands, and with it the chance of a lifetime. He squandered the opportunity.

When finally brought to battle, McClellan "seemed incapable of reacting decisively when his enemy did something he had not anticipated." Ultimately, he failed what Sears calls the test of battle: "Crisis on the battlefield left him incapable of initiative and virtually deranged, desperately attempting to shift the responsibility and consequences of his failure. . . . He lost his inner composure and with it the courage to command under the pressure of combat. . . . Many of his battlefield decisions were, for a trained soldier, simply irrational." The result at Antietam was the single bloodiest day in the nation's history. McClellan did little more than watch, apparently transfixed, as his army slugged it out with Lee's. After the fighting, he blew yet another chance to pursue and destroy Lee's forces before they went South.

Getting religion—which he did well before the war—only compounded his lack of nerve. As mentioned, McClellan believed he was God's chosen instrument to save the republic, but the responsibility for success or failure in individual engagements was God's—"not the most promising state of mind for a general to take to the battlefield," Sears notes.

As if the careerist aphorism—"nothing succeeds like failure"—needed to be proved, McClellan, having botched his time in the big show, ran against Lincoln as the Democratic candidate in 1864, and lost in an election not as close as other historians have made it seem. He retired from the Army, decided upon a self-imposed exile abroad, and put together notes for his memoirs. Once again a success in business and the toast of "the better class of people," as he called them, he returned to the U.S., and won the governorship of New Jersey. He died of heart disease at age 58 in 1885, celebrated right to the end. "History will do him justice," read the obituaries.

What Sears presents in *George B. McClellan: The Young Napoleon* is a study in command as fascinating as *The Caine Mutiny*, with McClellan as Queeg and the Army of the Potomac his *Caine*. He wisely jettisons the psychohistory, however, in favor of the historical facts and McClellan's own opinions, as presented in his fantastic letters and dispatches. It has taken 103 years, but history, finally, has done McClellan justice. □

LEDEEN
(continued from page 41)

smear them by claiming that the whole thing was improper and illegal.

The supplementary report issued by Oliver et. al. in the fall of 1988 was so silly that none of the major newspapers gave much space to it (in my discussions with Washington correspondents of the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, I found nothing but contempt for Oliver's handiwork). But the *Globe* found it attractive, and *Foreign Policy*, which is rapidly becoming the *National Enquirer* of foreign policy publications, found it greatly to its tastes.

Which all goes to show that it isn't sufficient for the major publications to ignore wacko stories; they have to be debunked. And the *Outlook* section of the *Washington Post*'s Sunday edition, edited by David Ignatius, has done more of that than any other publication of which I am aware. So let's give the award for best debunking to David Ignatius, and thank the *Post* for performing this indispensable service. □

CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 9)

Manicheans or Jansenists is worse than a cheap shot. It's an exposure of the writer's own ignorance, of her inability to distinguish between 2,000 years of development and twenty years of revolution.

And yes, we have our quarrels with John Paul II. But if the writer wasn't at least a little suspicious when the reigning Pontiff invited all "religions" of the world to desecrate Catholic altars at Assisi (by no means an aberration in this pontificate), then our arguments with her would be as "fruitless" as hers with Father Ringrose.

—Daniel Amon
Alexandria, Virginia

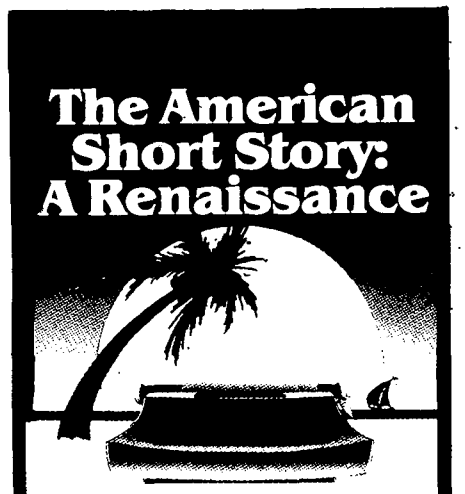
Charlotte Low Allen replies:
Mr. Amon's letter raises so many points that it is hard to know where to begin responding. I'll start with my name; it's "Mrs. Allen." Mr. Amon confuses a writer's distance from his subject with ridicule. It would be difficult for me to mock the Tridentine mass, for which I have a great remembered fondness and, as I made clear in the article, admiration. Like Mr. Amon, I find attending the English version of the Novus Ordo mass in most parish churches a dispiriting experience, with the congregation's attention systematically deflected away from the Holy Eucharist and into the realm of the touchy-feely. In Southern California, it seems practically mandatory for the entire congregation to hold hands during the Pater Noster. Gag me with a spoon.

The effect of these undignified liturgical customs on the male of the Catholic species has been devastating. In many a suburban house of worship on Sunday, Rosemary Radford Reuther's "Womanchurch" has become a living reality; lectors, cantors, Eucharistic ministers, and three-fourths of the congregation consist of middle-aged ladies in sensible shoes and wrap-around skirts. Their husbands, if they have them, are probably at home reading Hagar the Horrible. As I said in my article, there is fortunately no way to turn the Tridentine rite into a social workers' confab.

If the Lefebvrites' chief complaint were the loss of their beloved Latin liturgy or the infestation of professional malcontents in mid-level church bureaucracy, they would be a more sympathetic lot. But they have a host of other nitpicking grievances with, of all people, the genuinely traditionalist Pope John Paul II. Thus it is no wonder that Lefebvrites, young and old, seem a mite peculiar. Imagine devoting most of one's spiritual time and energy to quibbling over the correct translation of the consecration formula or whether it is right or wrong to pray in the company of non-Catholics. It is difficult to see Mother Teresa—or Mother Angelica—as followers of Marcel Lefebvre. These two ladies have better things to do.

It is also passing strange to defy the Pope in so serious a matter as the ordination of bishops and then deny (that's right) that any schism exists. That is plain old human pride, which often "goeth before a fall" (keep that in mind, ye who believe most of us will end up at the Big Barbecue). And please, Mr. Amon, you can't be serious in contending that St. Athanasius is not really a Lefebvrite parish. There's a photograph of the archbishop right out in the social room, along with quires of Lefebvrite literature.

Takeover Markets
In his article "Takeovers and Acquisitions: Who's Responsible?" (*TAS*, September 1988), Benjamin J. Stein notes that "unless I somehow missed something" there is no reason to believe that mergers and takeovers create value. Mr. Stein has indeed missed the boat, and missed it completely. In my view, he misunderstands how real-world asset and "management" markets function. As a result, it's not surprising that the primary point of Mr. Stein's article, that mergers and takeovers are motivated by investment bankers—middlemen out to make money for themselves alone—makes even less sense than the ex-



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planations for mergers that Mr. Stein rightfully rejects.

Mr. Stein correctly argues that such popular explanations for mergers and takeovers as the low price of the dollar, the alleged inability of firms to create good will for new products or new brands, and the belief that antitrust enforcement may be more vigorous under future administrations do not hold up under scrutiny. But these arguments are little more than strawmen. When Mr. Stein asks rhetorically why a company that previously sold at $26 a share could be considered a bargain at $55 a share, or, if it is a bargain at $55, how could the market have been so grossly incorrect, he reveals a fundamentally flawed perception of how the stock market values firms and the role of mergers and takeovers in augmenting their value.

Consider, for example, a firm whose capital consists of a single machine that produces ice cream. The value of that firm depends on the profitability of the ice cream it produces. If the firm produces only anchovy flavored ice cream, I suspect that its value will not be very high; it will certainly be less than if the firm produces more desirable flavors such as chocolate or vanilla. The point here is that the value of the firm depends not only on its ownership of capital equipment and other assets, but also on the ability and foresight of its managers to make the most of them.

In the "market for corporate control" managers compete for the right to control corporate assets. A firm that is valued under current management at $26 a share may be considered by a competing management team to be a bargain at $55 a share (or for that matter, at $155 a share), if the competing management team believes that it can more efficiently deploy or restructure the firm's assets. The current value of $26 a share is not an incorrect value, it merely reflects the returns from the current uses of the firm's assets. If the market perceives that the acquisition of the assets by the competing management team will raise the profitability of the firm, its share value will rise.

This kind of efficiency-enhancing redeployment is particularly important in an economy like ours that in recent years has experienced tremendous change. Important industries have been deregulated, the price of oil skyrocketed and crashed, a great technological revolution began and is continuing—in computers, telecommunications, bioengineering, and many other areas, and America has increasingly become part of a highly competitive world economy. By replacing one set of managers with another, mergers permit more rapid or different responses to these changes. In addition, they also create value by transferring new technologies and innovations to those firms best poised to exploit them. These responses to economic change help maintain U.S. competitiveness in international markets.

Mr. Stein dismisses the claim that takeovers increase value by citing a recent article by Murray Weidenbaum and Stephen Vogt. Contrary to the impression left by Mr. Stein, the Weidenbaum and Vogt article does not present any new evidence with respect to the profitability of takeovers; rather, it is a survey of a small number of articles previously published in various academic journals. Space does not allow for a detailed discussion of the Weidenbaum and Vogt piece. However, a thorough critique of this article by Laurence Schumann and Robert Stoner recently published in the *California Management Review*, Spring 1988 (the Weidenbaum and Vogt article was published in the Summer 1987 issue of this journal) casts great doubt on many of their conclusions. Moreover, the conclusions found in two much more exhaustive reviews of the academic literature, one by Michael Jensen and Richard Ruback and the other by Gregg Jarrell, James Brickley, and Jeffry Netter, completely contradict those drawn by Weidenbaum and Vogt.

Given what I take to be Mr. Stein's misunderstanding of the role of markets in valuing firms and the role of mergers and takeovers in this process, it is not surprising that his own explanation of why mergers take place would be so absurd. Does Mr. Stein actually expect us to believe that such individuals as T. Boone Pickens, Carl Icahn, and Sir James Goldsmith are so charitable or so unwise as to have dedicated their careers to financing the vacation homes of investment bankers? Firms and individuals purchase the services of investment bankers for one reason—to make money for themselves; and the only way these "raiders" can gain from acquisitions is by reorganizing or redeploying their targets' assets more efficiently and profitably than the targets' incumbent managers. Mr. Stein's "ignorant dealmaker" theory is one idea that could have plausibility only in the halls of Hollywood movie studios.

—Daniel Oliver, Chairman
Federal Trade Commission
Washington, D.C.

Benjamin J. Stein replies:
I worked for the FTC as a trial lawyer in the years 1971 to 1973. I was frightened then by the unquestioning acceptance of the most outlandish consumerist arguments by the FTC brass. Based on Mr. Oliver's letter, I am even more alarmed that the chariman of the Federal Trade Commission should so clearly see his role as shill for Morgan, Stanley and First Boston and Drexel Burnham Lambert.

I have read Professor Jensen's major article on takeovers, and I am certainly familiar with the vast lore of apology for the deep pocket guys and gals who run America's merger machinery. Chairman Oliver states it with touchingly childish faith, and I could almost admire his innocence. The fact is that there is no instance of any long term more efficient running of any large corporation after its takeover by management or LBO firms or anyone else.

There is plenty of evidence that any firm can *seem* to run more profitably if legions of workers are fired, unions are broken, equipment is allowed to go unreplaced, maintenance is deferred, and interim cash flow targets are worshipped as totems. But, of course, there is always a day of reckoning.

Maintenance cannot be deferred forever, and eventually companies have to be run as if they were in it for the long run. That time—of course—is long after the LBO guys and the investment bankers have gotten back fifty times their money, when the public owns the company again. Even major LBO honchos are by now owning up to the plain truth that today's LBO is done mainly for the up-front fees and the short-term junking, not for any more efficient use of capital. (I am not even going to seriously answer such a bizarre hypothesis as anchovy ice cream vs. chocolate and vanilla. If the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission really thinks that proves anything, I shudder for the republic.)

As to the failure of capital markets, how can anyone whose eyes are open defend them as efficient pricing mechanisms any longer, when they consistently fail to value companies at even close to their break-up value ("break-up" when interim cash flow is king, of course) even in markets which have a time horizon of about two hours, and value large companies almost exclusively on the basis of takeover and resale value? The efficient market was a lovely theory, made a lot of skeptics rich, and it might certainly work if there were full disclosure, honest and energetic analysis, and no rigging of bids. A cure for cancer would be nice as well.

Naturally, I do not think that Boone Pickens works for the investment bankers knowingly and exclusively. Naturally, I am quite confident that the LBO people and the investment bankers work together to defraud the small stockholder and appropriate "value," however artificially created, which by law and by the workings of capitalism should belong to the stockholders, for themselves, the insiders.

There is, of course, a legal and moral dimension to the taking of value away from stockholders and bondholders by fiduciaries for those people. The FTC is primarily an organization supposed to enforce law based on some moral principles of fairness for the ordinary citizen. Chairman Oliver's letter therefore makes me deeply sad at what has become of any idea of allegiance to fairness or to the small holder of anything. Chairman Oliver may recite his fairy tales about the market, but under the pretty language, an awful lot of money is being stolen from a lot of innocent people who thought the FTC and the SEC were there to protect them. I guess now we know why. As to Chairman Oliver's snippy little crack about Hollywood, I believe I have written more than he cares to read about Hollywood's errors of perception. But as to their knowing how big business, especially big finance, works today, the studio people have it all over the folks at 7th and Pennsylvania.

Conservatives and Containment
Col. Harry G. Summers's article ("Conservatives, Containment, and Vietnam," *TAS*, June 1988) will undoubtedly receive the replies which its seriousness merits, from those who are far better qualified than this layman. Still, it is a truism that it sometimes takes the layman to see the holes in the experts' theories, if only because they are not encumbered by the limitations in which those experts have been drilled.

If, as Colonel Summers asserts, the

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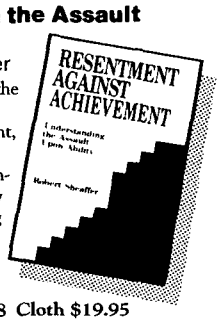

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United States is to be limited by the nature of the situation to wars of stalemate forevermore, then by his own arguments we are doomed to ultimate defeat. He points out at the end of his article that students in the War College stated unequivocally that they would not send their sons and daughters to war unless we had a plan for winning. Stalemate is not winning, and the very war to which the colonel points as a paradigm should prove that.

Just what did we "win" in Korea? We retrieved the *status quo antebellum* at the cost of thousands of American troops killed, while the Soviets (our ultimate enemy, let's face it) lost some weapons and a lot of Chinese. After the war the American people were depressed and resentful that our men had been forced to lay down their lives without an opportunity to win. The stage had already been set for Vietnam. According to Colonel Summers, this is the ultimate to which we can aspire from now on. Yet somehow we are to convince the American people that they should wax enthusiastic about a no win war of this sort. Then, presumably, all will be hunky-dory and we can hold the beast at bay forever. The author quotes Clausewitz, but it was Clausewitz who pointed out that the belligerent who fights a defensive war must win every battle, while the belligerent who fights an offensive war need win only the last.

Colonel Summers asseverates that the policy of containment has served us well. Where has it so served us? In Cuba? In Vietnam where it *was* practiced in theory as well as reality, since our forces were not permitted to play by the same rules as the enemy? In Nicaragua? Colonel Summers may state that containment has not been practiced in these places, since the Communists have been permitted to take fresh ground there. This reminds me of the Alcoholics Anonymous argument that those who go back to drinking are not evidence of failure on the part of the "program" because they obviously went off the program when they resumed drinking.

Colonel Summers's arguments remind me of other popular attitudes today. When he states that we can't fight to victory because of the nuclear standoff, I am put in mind of today's recommended cure for crime: bar your windows, put double bolts on all your doors, never go out at night without a crowd around you, and hope the criminals leave you alone. For some reason the "best thinking" of today always works in favor of the bad guys. We must not take the offensive against the Communists because they may blast us out of existence in a fit of pique, just as it would be rash to face down a burglar or rapist with a .357 magnum, because he might get angry and hurt us; and besides, it would be *immoral* to defend our life's accumulations at the risk of killing someone who only wants to hock them for a fix. Apparently, for some reason which is never addressed, only the enemy, in this age of nuclear "standoff," has the privilege of advancing, and of occupying capitals.

The colonel tells us that once American will had been "broken," what happened on the battlefield was irrelevant. Apparently American will, once broken, cannot be mended. Does he really think that, if the President and our military leaders could have stormed Hanoi, American will would have remained in shards? Well, I think not. Of course by that time I suppose the Soviets would have sulkily reduced Washington, Chicago, and New York to nuclear ash heaps, not caring that we would in return have done the same to their cities.

But "Let us fight on to the ultimate stalemate!" is not the sort of cry that is likely to raise the American people out of their present lethargy, or overcome their hedonistic will to resist any attempt at resistance. These are the elements that have led to the present mess in this world, and that, together with the wishful belief that we can hold the Soviets at bay forever, have probably doomed this country and Western civilization. Personally, I don't know whether the American people can be raised to their senses; but I certainly doubt that it can happen without the kind of shot in the arm that would accompany the ascension of, say, North Korea or Poland from the Soviet orbit. As William Buckley pointed out decades ago, it's going to take nerve to win this one. And I don't think he was talking about the kind of nerve that assumes that *our* nuclear deterrent cannot possibly defend us from Soviet chastisement.

—Russell W. Martin
Orange, California

Straights on Parade

I was delighted to read of our ex-gay organization in your September issue ("Gays on Parade," by Tom Bethell).

If any of your readers would like a free introductory packet of literature, they can write us at: Exodus International, PO Box 2121, San Rafael, CA 94912.

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—Bob Davies
Executive Director
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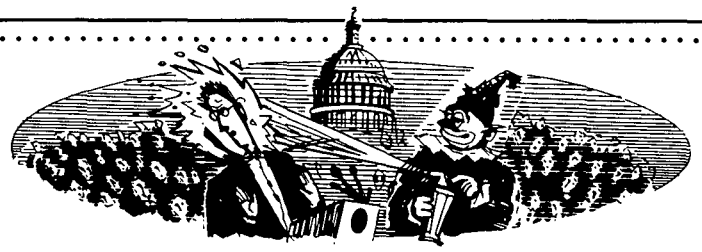

If you drive or take the subway, it's a bit of a hike to the John F. Kennedy Gravesite and Eternal Flame in Arlington National Cemetery, which may be why so many come by Tourmobile. Threading its way through the Washington area, from the Library of Congress to Mount Vernon with all the usual stops along the way, the Tourmobile pulls right up to the Kennedy grave ("Authorized by the Department of the Interior" is the Tourmobile motto). There it pours out a wave of sightseers, wrapped in parkas on a cold autumn afternoon and heavy-laden with shopping bags from the Air and Space Museum and with children leveled into stupefaction by hours of tourism. "Eight minutes!" the Tourmobile guide calls—if you want to see everything there's a limit on somber reflection—and the wave rolls out and up the slate walkways to the flame where it crests in silence and recedes at last—"Eight minutes!"—and rolls back to the Tourmobile where it pours through the doors that fold shut, and in a cloud of diesel fumes is gone.

• • •

At the flame there are three markers: one for the President and two for Kennedy children who preceded their father in death. On a Saturday in late October I visited the grave and found myself next to a couple who, judging by their accents, were fresh off the Amtrak from Chicago. The man looked at the marker for Patrick Bouvier Kennedy, who lived for two days during August 1963. "This must be Bobby," he said, solemnly—and, being a Chicagoan, very loudly. "No," his wife answered, in a half-shout. "It's for a little boy who died." "Are you sure?" her husband said. "I think it's for Bobby." "It's for a little boy," she said emphatically. To close the discussion she turned and stepped down to the tiny plaza where, on a curving granite plinth, are inscribed passages from Kennedy's Inaugural. Being a Chicagoan myself, I wasn't surprised when she insisted on reading each passage aloud, in a voice straight from Damen Avenue. "Let ta word go fort' . . ." she said. And: "Now ta trumpet summons us again . . ." When she finally finished—"In ta long history of ta worl' only a few generations have been granted ta role of defendin' freedom in its hour of maximum danger"—she heaved a deep sigh. Much moved, she said: "Such beautiful words!"

• • •

Beautiful words, and not one of them John Kennedy's, alas. Washington is a city of many monuments—the temples of our civic religion, as they say in college sociology class. At the Jefferson Memorial you can read the Declaration of Independence and the Statutes of Virginia for Religious Freedom; across the Tidal Basin, at the Lincoln Memorial, you can read the Second Inaugural and the Gettysburg Address. In a quiet, out-of-the-way alcove at the National Cathedral, you unexpectedly find engraved Lincoln's incomparable Farewell Address at Springfield. Busy men both, Jefferson and Lincoln; even (dare I say it?) as busy as the modern pol. But when they had something important to say they took pen and paper and went to work. And those words reveal today in their fitting memorials the shape of the minds of the men who wrote them, in a studied blending of poetry and purpose. Which accounts for the eeriness at the Kennedy memorial, and in the high-toned words carved in that curve of granite. All the poetry, all the surging rhetorical uplift, is the work—it's readily admitted—of Ted Sorensen and John Kenneth Galbraith and a dozen other skilled hired hands; and, when stripped of the poetry, the purpose—which is all John Kennedy, as the man who spoke the words but didn't write them, could lay rightful claim to—vanishes. So where, on this Virginia hillside exposed to the wind and the weather, is the man?

• • •

One answer, which of course isn't really an answer, is that the question itself has faded into irrelevance. This is written before the ceremonies have gotten underway marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of Kennedy's assassination, but already, in late October, the bookstores are keister-deep in memorial volumes, and the newsmagazines—most notably *U.S. News & World Report*—have begun to weigh in with their lugubrious reflections. So far there have been few references to the facts which might cast light on the more obscure regions of JFK's character: that he was often moved by a reckless and inexhaustible goatishness, for example ("I need it at least once a day," he reportedly told a colleague), or that he accepted (with well-deserved modesty) great acclaim and a Pulitzer Prize for writing a book, *Profiles in Courage*, which he didn't write. Just how obscure such facts remain in the national consciousness was indicated by a Harris poll in the early eighties, in which Kennedy was rated first among the last nine Presidents in "setting high moral standards" for the country.

• • •

Such a raising-up would have been hard to predict twenty-five years ago. William Manchester, in his recently republished contribution to the Kennedy myth, *One Brief Shining Moment* (Little, Brown, $16.95), writes: "When Jackie asked you [among the memoir's many unattractive features is that the author refers to himself only in the second-person] to write an account of the President's last days and his funeral, with the understanding that it could not be published for another three years, your literary agent, who was rightly regarded as the best in his craft, predicted that by then the public would have lost interest in Jack." At his death, Kennedy, like all Presidents and perhaps more than most, was controversial, by no means universally admired, and it is refreshing to have Manchester, in an otherwise predictable hagiography, admit as much. Likewise, a chapter of *Life in Camelot* (Little, Brown, $40.00) is boldly entitled "Camelot Had Its Bad Moments." At Vienna, after all, Khrushchev ate Jack for breakfast and then built the Berlin Wall to work off the calories. The tubby premier placed missiles in Cuba and then extracted from Kennedy a guarantee of Fidel's sovereignty as the price for removing them. Back home, meanwhile, the President couldn't pry his legislation loose from Congress with a crowbar.

• • •

But to the keepers of the Kennedy flame—well, here's Arthur Schlesinger, who as a historian has specialized in the unfalsifiable assertion: "Kennedy would have beaten Goldwater by an even bigger margin than Johnson and would have picked up even more seats in the House of Representatives." And the late Teddy White: "If he had gone on till 1968 it might have been . . . one of the three most memorable administrations in American history." And, lastly, into the stratosphere with PBS's Robert MacNeil, editor of *The Way We Were: The Year Kennedy was Shot* (Carroll & Graf, $39.95): "His life and death bore the marks that have always turned heroes into legends and legends into myths—stories so powerful that they flow eventually into the underground river of human consciousness."

• • •

Really? How does a view so ahistorical and far-fetched—so *kitschy*—gain common currency among grown men? *Life in Camelot* contains some revealing quotes in this regard from *Time* magazine's Hugh Sidey, widely billed as "Jack Kennedy's favorite reporter," a billing not at all difficult to understand. "Has there ever been a more suculent time for a young reporter?" Sidey asks. "The mingling of journalism with power and wealth . . . it was a golden time for scribes. He talked to us, listened to us, honored us, ridiculed us, got angry with us, played with us, laughed with us, corrected us and all the time lifted our trade to new heights of respect and importance." There—I contend—you have it. John Lennon, another pop icon inflated, in death, beyond all reasonable proportion, once told a friend, "If you want a good biography when you're dead, pick your biographer and be nice to him while you're alive." It's an old device, and one which John Kennedy used to good effect. Of course he could not have anticipated the power that those he flattered—the journalists, the academics, the artists—would eventually assume. So now, when they celebrate Camelot, they celebrate themselves; the tears they cry are for their own "golden time," surely not the country's. *Le Camelot, c'est moi.* The nostalgia of a clique has been nationalized. When the encomiums swell to tidal levels on this sad anniversary, as they certainly will from Sorensen and Galbraith and MacNeil and Manchester and the rest of the best and the brightest, we should remember that John Kennedy, a graceful and witty man if nothing else, deserves more, and less. —*AF*

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CURRENT WISDOM

Humanist

A poetic outburst in an otherwise unexceptional essay, "Beyond the Ten Commandments: Formulating a Humanistic Ethic to Supersede Christianity," by Lester Mondale:

Since the beginnings of recorded time, a few rare persons—the Buddhas, Tolstoys, Gandhis, Schweitzers—have reacted with gut, as well as ethical, revulsion to egos forever at it contesting and denigrating egos to the predominance of the individious. Profoundly injured, they have protested the idea that the jungle is the natural order of intermingling psyches. We humans were created, they have said, for a more healthful, secure, sustaining, joyously abundant mingling, one with another. We are better suited by head and heart and gut for a more finely sensitive order of coexistence.

[November/December 1988]

Weekly Agenda

(Fairfax County, Virginia)

Another visionary role for government, devised this time by the Eleanor Roosevelts of booming Fairfax County:

The death of a pet is a special kind of loss, and pet owners can help themselves and others by sharing their feelings with those who are experiencing the same sorrow.

The County Department of Animal Control is sponsoring support group meetings for those people who are having a difficult time coping with the loss of a pet. These support groups will be managed by a professional grief and bereavement counselor. The support group meeting will be held at the County Animal Shelter, 4500 West Ox Road in Fairfax on Wednesday, September 21, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

[September 8, 1988]

Mother Jones

Swiftian flights and Voltairian leaps from the literary Miss Barbara Ehrenreich, satirist:

Of course, our American electoral system isn't perfect—what is?—and there are all kinds of proposals for reform. Some people think we ought to restore the two-party system, meaning that Bentsen would have to run as a Republican and Dukakis would have to run as a L------. There are even a few radicals who think we ought to extend the franchise to the poor, the tired, and so forth.

But the only thing that really bothers me is the millions of people whose very lives may depend on the outcome of the elections—but who aren't allowed to vote at all. I'm thinking, of course, of the three million Nicaraguans, and the endangered residents of various U.S. enemy and client states scattered throughout the world. So no matter how cretinous the candidates are, no matter how insulting the campaign, I grit my teeth and vote the way the Nicaraguans, etc., would if they were given a say. In the interest of fairness, and to save yourself excruciating thought, you might just want to do the same.

[November 1988]

Village Voice

Campaign '88 as interpreted for the morons in *VV*'s vast audience by one of *VV*'s many practicing psychoanalysts:

In 1988, the Democrats have their image-making apparatus trained on the good ol' boy and his less sectarian counterpart, the white ethnic male. In order to lure him from the Republicans, with their implicit promise to keep women and minorities down, the Democrats are fielding a man called Duke, with its John Wayne vibe of entrenched male power.

Call it butch liberalism: progressive (in matters of race and class) but also patriotic and patriarchal. It speaks to a populist worldview the Democrats have often relied on to wrest power from the Republicans. In the party's scenario, Ronald Reagan did not win because the middle class began to see programs that benefitted the poor as a threat to its fragile economic status. Ron won because he knew how to play butch. Portraying Walter Mondale as a "San Francisco Democrat," with all that label connotes about a city that succumbed to queers, enabled Reagan to appeal to an America buffeted by sexual anxiety.

[August 23, 1988]

In These Times

A glance at the epistolary page of a leading lunatic sheet turns up two future Democratic presidential nominees, to wit:

Robert of Carpinteria, at the end of his patience:

If you don't stop harassing Dukakis in every issue, we're going to end up with the CIA (Bush) in the White House for four more years. Your petty editorial (*ITT*, Aug. 17) about Dukakis' mental health indicates your perverse desire to get Bush elected so you'll have more to complain about. Even Jesse Jackson is trying to help Dukakis in spite of everything. So, come on. Help out a little more, please.

—Robert Dautch
Carpinteria, Calif

And John of Edmonton, in a revelatory frame of mind:

In your September 7 issue a letter you published written by Lenni Brenner (Berkeley, Calif.) contains a reference to Mother Teresa, with the clear indication that she is some paragon of virtue, some saintly woman of peace.

This is not the case at all, and your readers should be aware of it. What she really is is a dangerous religious fanatic. She has been addressing anti-abortion meetings in Canada and holds the view that abortion should never be practiced even when the mother's life is in peril. She further is of the opinion that women who have abortions and the doctors performing them should be jailed.

—John G. Packer
Edmonton, Alberta

[October 19-25, 1988]

Esquire

Studs Terkel, a leading proponent of anal history, still practicing his dreadful art:

We are winners, right? We are the most glorious people who ever lived, nobody like us, right? Well, in the Vietnam War, we didn't win against the little guys in black pajamas. We're the bully on the block, and we're walking down the block with a bloody nose. The world's laughing at us, so we've got to beat somebody. So bam, bam, bam. We kicked the shit out of Grenada. And we cheered because we beat somebody. We're old Muhammad Ali knocking the shit out of Woody Allen. That's what it comes to. We're accustomed to asking not what's right or wrong, but only, "Are we winning?" What lesson have we learned?

[June 1988]

Ms.

The improbably named Letty Cottin Pogrebin unburdens herself of still more morbid ratiocinations:

As the presidential election campaign heats up for the home stretch, watch out for "the wimp factor" and its hidden agenda. Whether they mean to be or not, when someone calls a public man a "wimp" its effect is to delegitimate feminist-humanist values. "Wimp" suggests "sissy" or "faggot," which arouses the mega-monster, homophobia, which in turn scares people away from caring behaviors they might otherwise practice and admire. . .

Wimpery is bad enough in show business, but in politics the accusation can be fatal. Beyond "wimp" lies the unspeakable—the possibility that a prospective world leader might be a lily-livered pansy. Thus, wihout being a literal accusation of homosexuality, wimp is heard as an attack on the candidate's manliness, his strength, his ability to tough it out against other countries, minority groups, women.

[September 1988]

Mother Jones

Interviewed in probing, searching *Mother Jones*, the feminist gogue Miss Nancy Chodorow reveals how much she has learned about the Birds & Bees:

MJ: *Your thesis is that "traditional" parenting isn't particularly good for daughter or son. Can you summarize why?*

NC: For daughters, being taken care of by a mother nearly exclusively tends to give them a sense of self that is more connected to other people, more flexible ego boundaries. It creates in women a kind of psychological need for being in primary relationships. Boys who are raised primarily by a mother tend to define their sense of self as separate, as different, as distant. They are very preoccupied with a hyperindividualism, they are likely to be more fearful of intimacy and closeness, and they're liable to develop what I call a male psychology of male dominance—wanting to make themselves different from women and better than women.

[November 1988]

Progressive

Still more reasons for Bush/Quayle in '88 from an inflamed editorialist at a leading regressive monthly:

George Bush wants to make the election a simple choice between Left and Right. And he has lived up to his share of the bargain: He has proved himself to be as scarily right-wing as his mentor, Ronald Reagan.

Wrapping himself like a mummy in the Stars and Stripes, he has shown an uncanny instinct for the ugly and the intolerant. In California, he intentionally eats boycotted grapes to show that he is squarely opposed to unions. At campaign stop after campaign stop, he brandishes his support of the death penalty—even as he proclaims "the sanctity of life" for unborn fetuses. He supports every weapons system Pentagon contractors have managed to concoct, and he shows no realization that the arms race can and must be halted. He promises no change from Reagan's interventionist policies in the Third World; indeed, with Bush's experience as head of the CIA and with the cast of former CIA characters surrounding him, U.S. meddling and manipulation abroad are likely to expand in a Bush Administration.

On most domestic issues, Bush has nothing useful to say. Except for his limited day-care proposal and his silly savings idea, he has ignored the bread-and-butter issues that confront Americans in their daily lives. He offers no solution to the lack of affordable housing, the scandal of health insurance or the decline of well-paying jobs for vast numbers of Americans.

Instead of addressing these urgent concerns, he is content simply to label Dukakis a liberal. Bush's first device was the painfully inane issue of the Pledge of Allegiance. Once that grew old, he played another 1950s card, branding Dukakis a "card-carrying member of the ACLU." One might have thought that thirty-five years after McCarthyism spilled its venom, this kind of attack would have no force. But Bush has made it a winner: Civil liberties are somehow un-American in George Bush's lexicon, and for reasons that can only be construed as frightening, the American people seem to be buying the slander.

[November 1988]

In These Times

The venerable Dr. Alexander Crockburn lapses into a rare recognition of the sacred on the occasion of the death of a dangerous anti-Communist:

Appropriately enough, Bush took the opportunity in his introduction of Dan Quayle to the world to mourn the passage of his friend Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, president of Pakistan, whose life came blessedly to an end in an air crash in mid-August.

[August 31, 1988]

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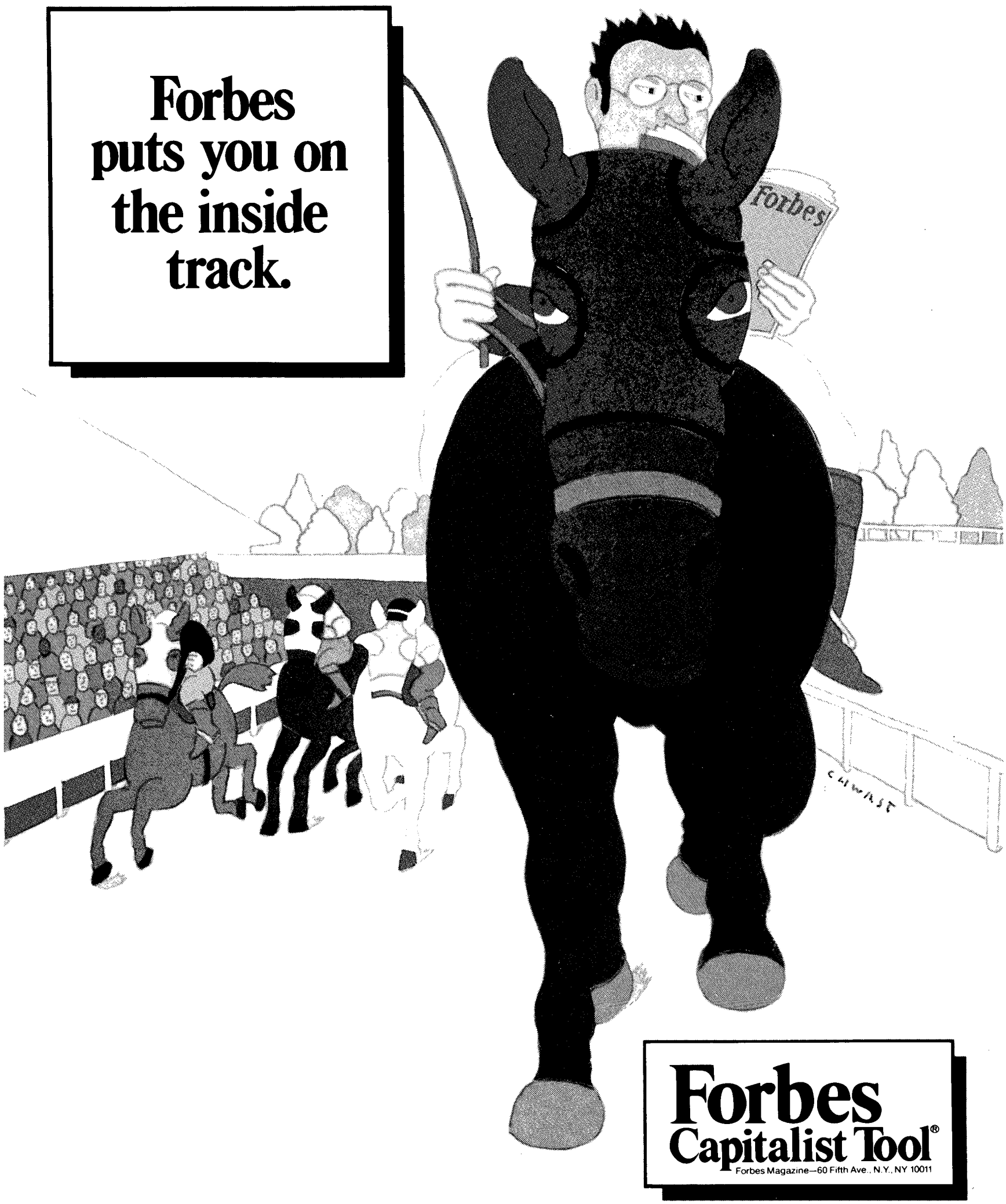

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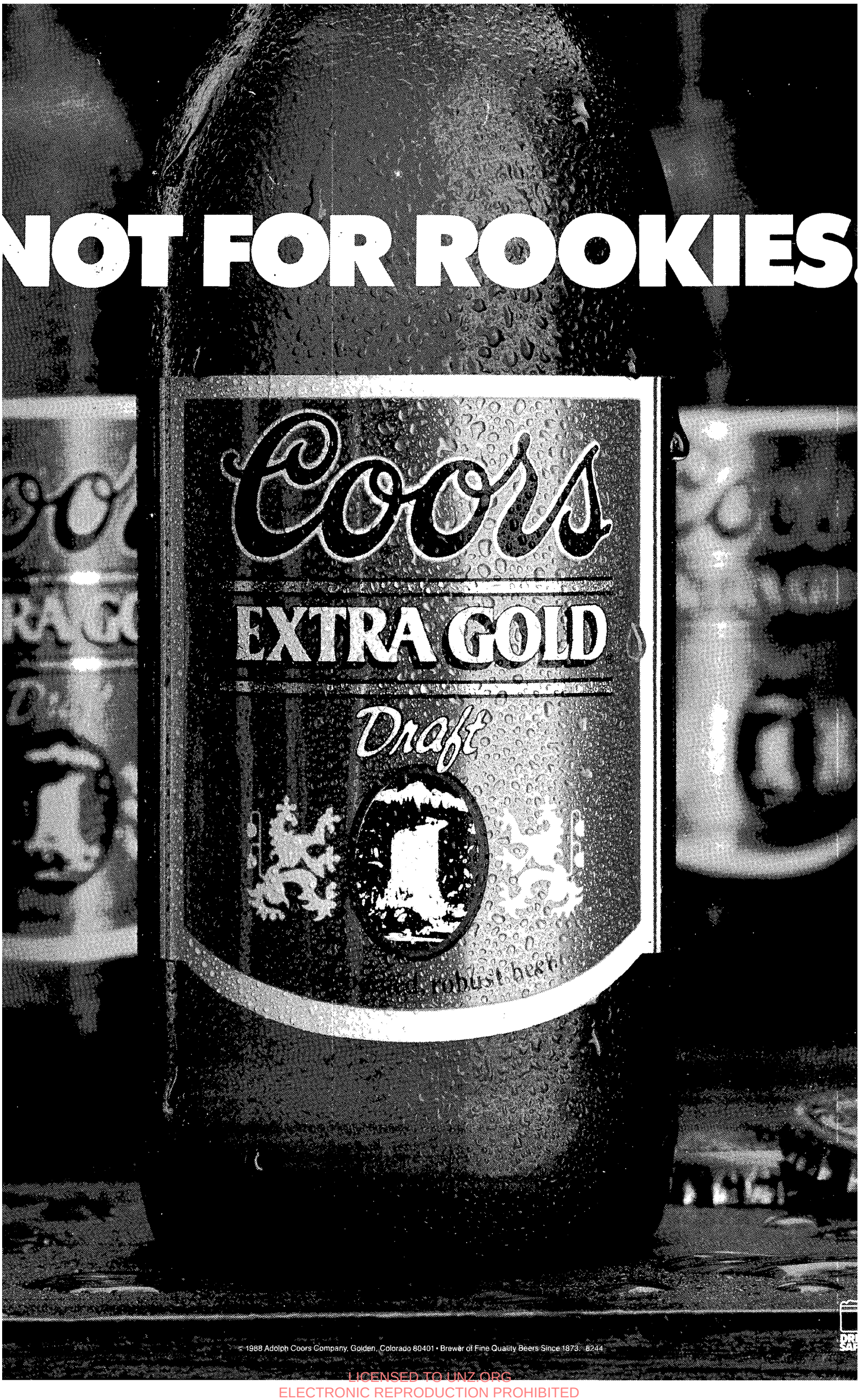
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